

## **Admin Café Focus Group Summary**

### **July 22, 2008**

Over the last year, Admin Café has undergone several changes to minimize any financial loss to Nutrition Services. The hours of operation are now from 11 AM to 1 PM, staffing has been reduced, and the menu modified. Challenges remain for Admin Café to break even. The purpose of the focus group was to address how Admin Café can utilize Nutrition Services resources to provide a variety of choices and attract enough customers to cover expenses.

### **Methodology**

Nutrition Services invited 360 Colborne staff, who frequent Admin Café, to participate in a 60-minute focus group. Questions included: what are your general thoughts about how to increase lunch participation, how important is a variety of choices, what do you think of the food, and what food choices could improve satisfaction. Participants completed a questionnaire that asked them about their lunch preferences, price tolerance, and food choices. Eight members from various departments participated.

### **Key Insights**

The group openly discussed the history of Admin Café, their emotions regarding the recent changes, and to reconsider morning hours. The overall concern was regarding how Admin Café was addressing building employee's needs during work hours. Comments included: "Nutrition Services needs to adapt to employee needs." Cafeteria service is considered to be part of employee benefits. Ask customers for input prior to making changes." The group overwhelmingly stated the lunch menu lacks appeal. When asked how important is a variety of choices? "Consistency is needed so the customer knows what to expect," a participant stated. The group continued to comment on the options and the quality of the food offered. "Options, quality, and hot food are important. The school lunch favorite should be 360 favorites. Like dunkers, meat loaf, marinara, navy bean soup, hoagies and club sandwiches." The group expressed the need to increase marketing. "Email menu, specials to 360 staff." They also encouraged outreach to meeting organizers, informing them of the accommodations available and be prepared when large groups are in the building. Catering comments were minimal, with a complaint about when coffee was available for pickup. As far as the environment, "The industrial fan in the cafeteria is loud. Need to find out how to get the temperature correct or find a different method for circulating the air." The response to the questionnaire, revealed a lunch preference for a menu that offers good coffee, variety of breads, sandwiches, and soups with a price range of \$3.95 - \$7.99. Participants valued fresh and healthy food options. They expressed a dislike for traveling outside of the building for lunch.

### **Recommendation**

With over 300 employees at 360 Colborne, the opportunity exists for Admin Café to eliminate the subsidy from Nutrition Services and have a break even operation. The recommendation is to continue offering lunch and limited catering. Revise the menu choices and prices towards adult tastes and expectations. Reduce the clutter and clean up the look of the serving and dining area. Improve communication efforts with staff and visitors making them aware of the lunch and catering options. Review the monthly performance of the operation and make adjustments as necessary. It will be important for staff to realize their participation will determine Admin Café success. In the next 90-days, survey 360 Colborne staff regarding menu options and meet with focus group to discuss participation.