



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
Community Health Centers®

Abbott and NACHC Food 4 Health Promising Practices - Expanding Food Access and Security through Community Health Center Partnerships

April 16, 2026



Session Presenters



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Social Drivers of Health
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Director, Data Analytics
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Learning Objectives

1

Define food insecurity and describe its impact on chronic disease

2

Identify strategies Community Health Centers (CHCs) are using to improve access to healthy food

3

Explore how CHCs can partner with food banks, farms, and other organizations

3 Questions to Frame the Discussion

- 
1. What partnerships would you need to improve food security and health outcomes?
 2. What infrastructure do you need to support, scale and sustain these efforts?
 3. What is the impact of the partnerships formed on patients, their families, the community, and local food systems?

SEPP Framework

Science

Develop robust metrics and data points to measure the impact of Food for health programs, including improved patient outcomes, cost savings, and community health benefits.

Education

Educate and inform the healthcare workforce, patients, and community partners about the importance of integrating nutrition into care, promoting food as a critical component of whole-person health.

Practice

Identify and scale sustainable, community-centered models for implementing Food for health programs within health centers, including workflows, partnerships, and best practices.

Policy

Develop reimbursement strategies and policy frameworks to secure long-term financial sustainability for Food for health initiatives, including aligning with value-based care models and exploring innovative funding sources.

What is Food for Health?

1. Integrates nutrition directly into health care delivery.
2. Treats food not as a referral, but as a core part of prevention, chronic disease management, and whole-person care.
3. Moves beyond screening and referral toward clinical integration of food as a therapeutic intervention.



Food Prescriptions



Medically Tailored Meals and Groceries



Produce Boxes



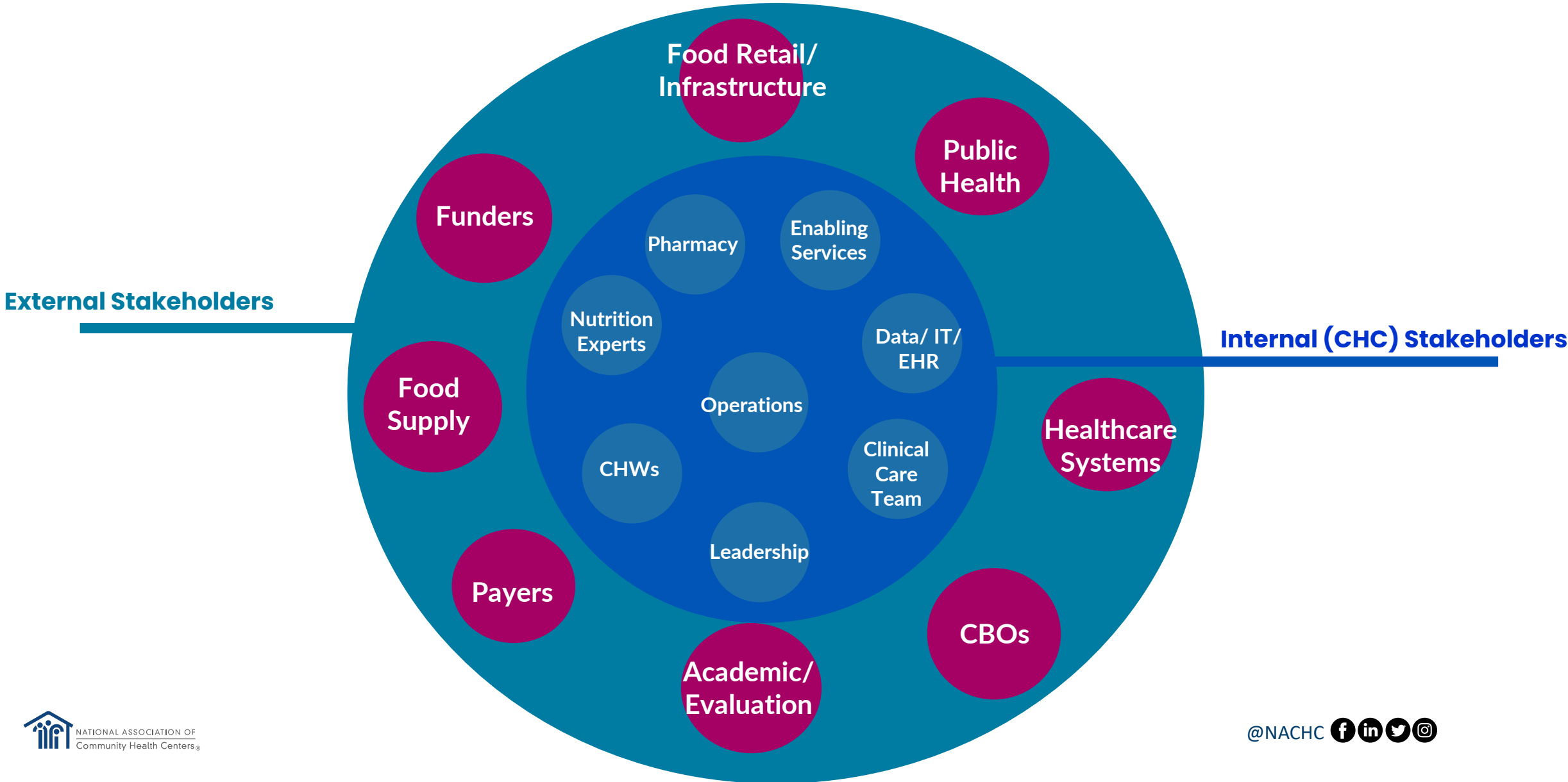
Nutrition counseling and cooking education

Why CHCs Are Central to Expanding Food Access

- They serve patients with a high burden of nutrition-sensitive conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.
- CHCs are trusted, community-based providers. They are governed by patient-majority boards and deeply connected to local communities.
- They operate integrated, team-based care models that already include care coordination and enabling services.
- Food for Health aligns directly with CHCs' core mission to improve access, reduce avoidable utilization, and support cost-effective care.



Stakeholder Networks



Promising Practices

Definition: A promising practice is an intervention, model, or approach that demonstrates measurable improvements in health outcomes and shows strong potential for replication, sustainability, and scale.

Dimension	Description	Operational Indicators
Demonstrated Impact	Evidence of improved clinical or population outcomes linked to a defined intervention (“dose,” duration, and target population).	Quantitative outcomes (e.g., A1c control, blood pressure, food security); qualitative impact (e.g., patient stories, community engagement).
Replicability and Scalability	Feasible to implement in other CHC settings with defined core components, workflows, and documentation.	Implementation guide, staffing model, or toolkit available; adaptable to varying CHC size and resources.
Interdisciplinary Integration	Involves collaboration across clinical, behavioral health, dental, and community-based teams.	Shared care plans, integrated data systems, multidisciplinary case management.
Community Responsiveness	Developed or adapted with community input to ensure relevance, fairness and trust.	Engagement of patients or community partners, or customary brokers in design and evaluation.
Evaluation and Learning	Includes a monitoring and evaluation plan that defines baselines, outcomes, and milestones.	Use of PRAPARE® or non-clinical factors of health data; clear outcome measures and feedback loops.
Sustainability and Value	Demonstrates potential for ongoing support through reimbursement, partnerships, or other funding models.	Alignment with value-based payment models, grant-to-payment transitions, or system-level integration.



Food Is Health: Taking Action to Close the Loop

Deanna Reinoso, MD
Medical Director of Social Drivers of Health, Eskenazi Health
Eskenazi Health Center, Indianapolis, IN

Eskenazi Health Center facilities are conveniently located throughout the neighborhoods of Indianapolis, Indiana.

- Eskenazi Health Center Grande
- Eskenazi Health Center Grassy Creek
- Eskenazi Health Center Pecar
- Eskenazi Health Center Blackburn
- Eskenazi Health Center Primary Care
- Eskenazi Health Center Pedigo
- Eskenazi Health Center Westide
- Eskenazi Health Center W. 38th Street
- Eskenazi Health Center N. Illinois St.

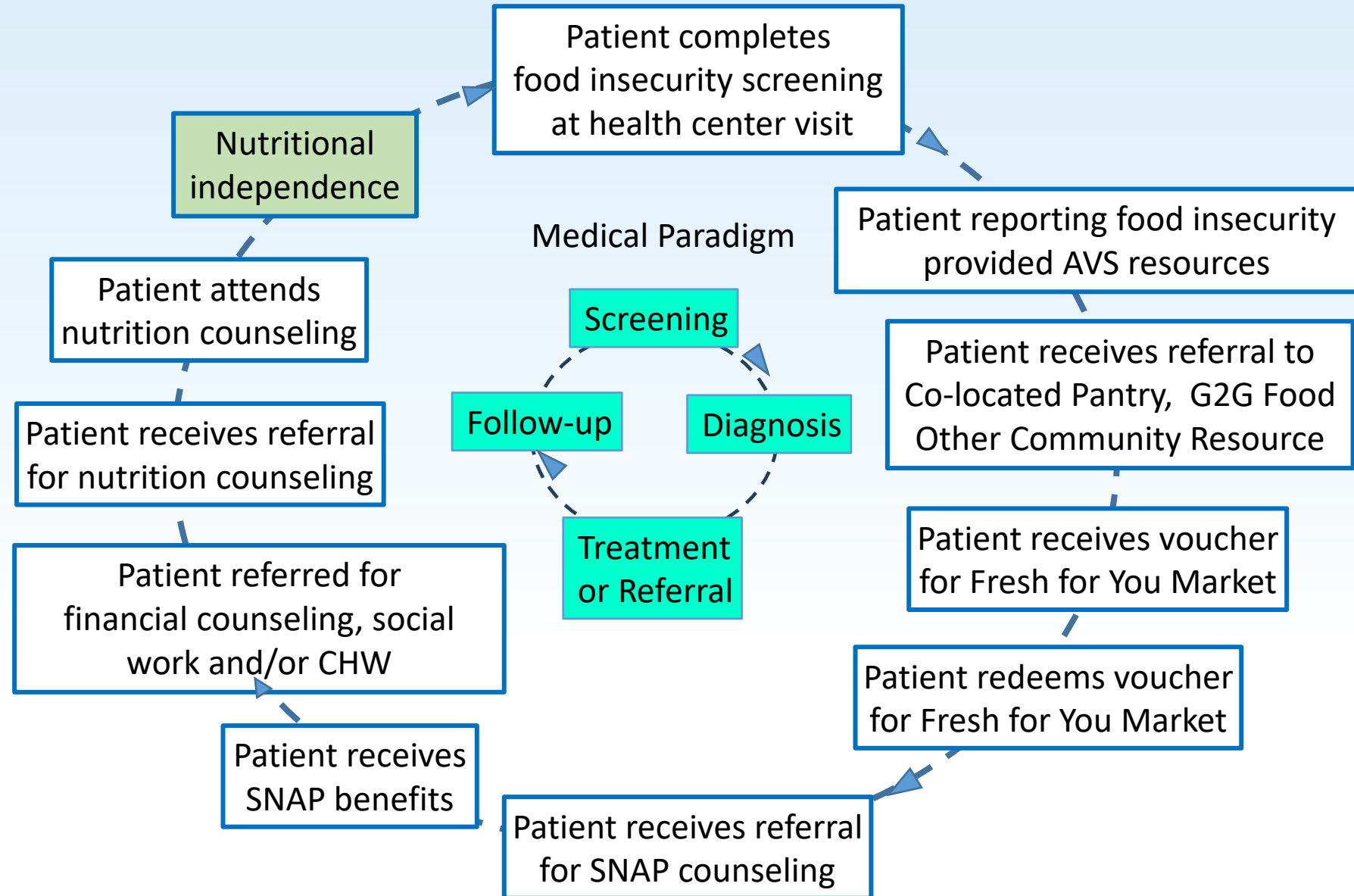


Addressing Food Insecurity

- “**Food is Health**” programs highlight the role of nutrition in treating and preventing chronic diseases
- It starts with **Universal Food Insecurity Screening**
- Universal Screening alone is inadequate- we strive for **Universal Response** with a “Closed Loop”
- Health Center Food Access Integration goal is to move people from food insecurity to **Nutritional Independence** for **Improved Health Outcomes**



“Closing the Loop”
for food insecurity
at Eskenazi Health
Center requires
many steps





Food is Health: Universal Screening

Food Insecurity Screening- "Hunger Vital Signs"

Food Insecurity

Within the past 12 months, you worried that your food would run out before you got the money to buy more.

[Sometimes true](#) taken yesterday

Never true

Sometimes true

Often true

Patient refused



Within the past 12 months, the food you bought just didn't last and you didn't have money to get more.

[Sometimes true](#) taken yesterday

Never true

Sometimes true

Often true

Patient refused



Do you or someone in your family receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program)?

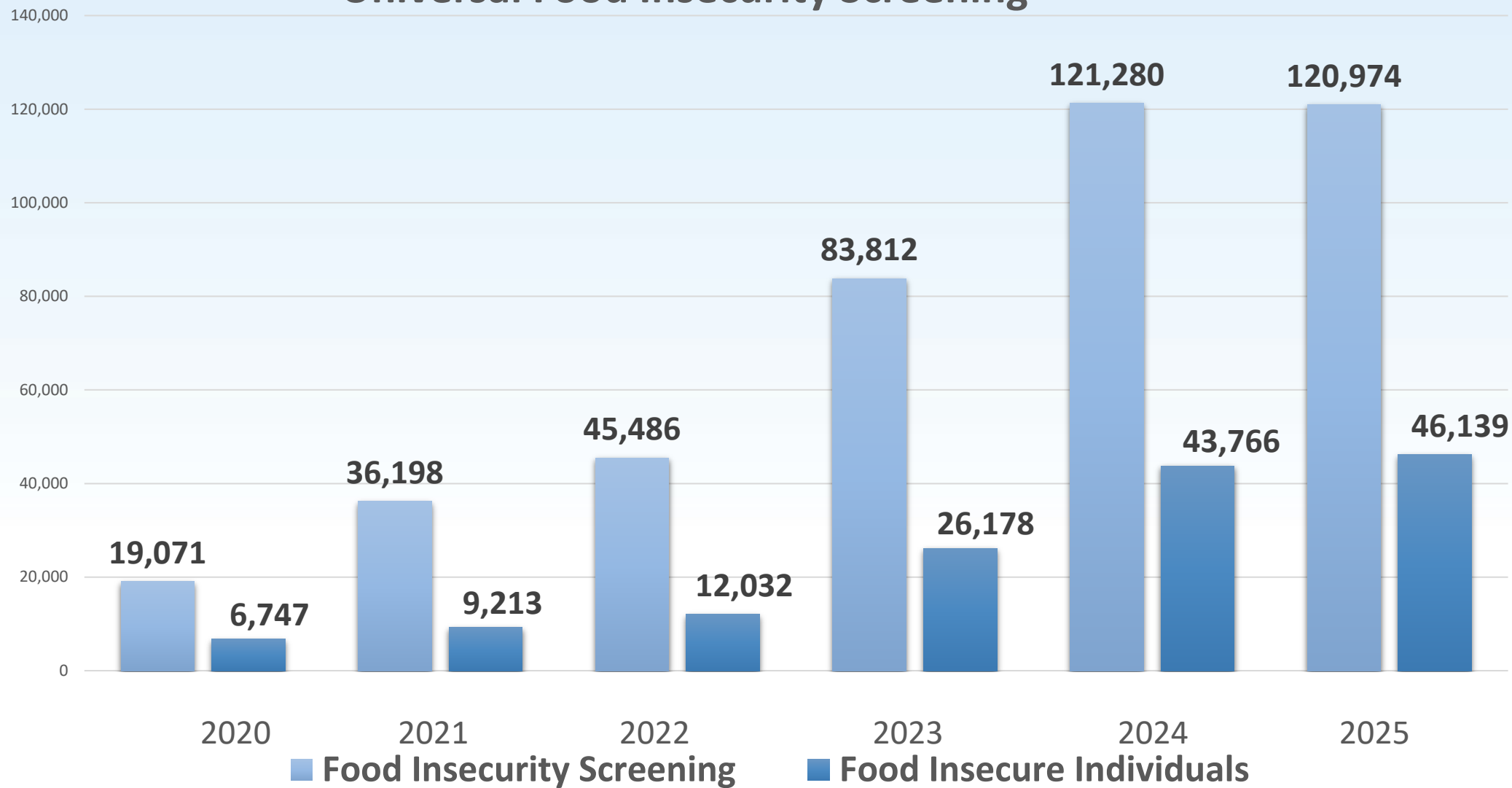
Yes, I or a family member receive SNAP

No, do not need or qualify at this time

No, I would like additional information and assistance

Decline

Eskenazi Health Universal Food Insecurity Screening



Universal Response for Positive SDOH Screens

ESKENAZI HEALTH



Food Assistance and Resources

Food assistance and resources are available to individuals through Eskenazi Health SNAP Outreach and Community Compass.

Eskenazi Health SNAP Outreach Coordinators

- Please call 317.880.3316.
- Eskenazi Health SNAP outreach coordinators are available to provide free, confidential application assistance.

Community Compass

- Download the Community Compass app on your smartphone or text "hi" to 317.434.3758 to receive assistance with:
 - Free meal locations
 - Free groceries
 - Food-related events
 - Information on WIC, SNAP and other resources

Fresh for You Market

- The Fresh for You Market is located outside the Sidney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital on The Matthew R. Gutwein Commonsground and accepts SNAP.
- Hours of operation are Monday - Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

If these categories do not apply to you, please speak with a member of your health care team. For additional resources, please visit www.eskenazihealth.edu/neighborhood-resources or scan the QR code with your smartphone camera.



Passive referrals:

- AVS Resource Sheet
- FFYM market/pantry hybrid \$30 Voucher

Active referrals:

- Internal food resources (ProduceRX, Medically Tailored Meals, etc)
- Dietitians, CHW, SNAP Outreach, Nutrition Programming, Lifestyle Medicine ect
- FindHelp! Referrals or Direct CBO Referral
- Referral to EHC co-located food pantry or G2G Food

ESKENAZI HEALTH

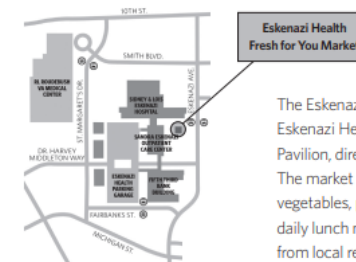
Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market at the Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion

Hours
Monday - Friday
10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Lunch served from
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.



Open to the public



The Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market is located on the Eskenazi Health downtown campus in the Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion, directly outside the Sandra Eskenazi Outpatient Care Center. The market offers a variety of grocery items including fresh fruits and vegetables, pantry staples, kitchen utensils, pre-made meals, and a daily lunch menu featuring dishes made in collaboration with chefs from local restaurants.

ESKENAZI HEALTH

Grocery Coupon

You are eligible for up to \$30 in free grocery items at the Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market at the Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion. Please redeem this coupon upon checkout.

Not valid for grab-and-go foods or made-to-order meals.
Expires seven days after the date on your After Visit Summary.



V8-B22

Eskenazi Health Center- Food Access Resources

- Fresh for You Markets (Market/Pantry Hybrid) holistic food access model
- FQHC site + Food pantry now 10 years in operation
- Gleaners Foodbank- Gleaners 2 Go Food Distributions
- Extensive collaboration with local food access partners

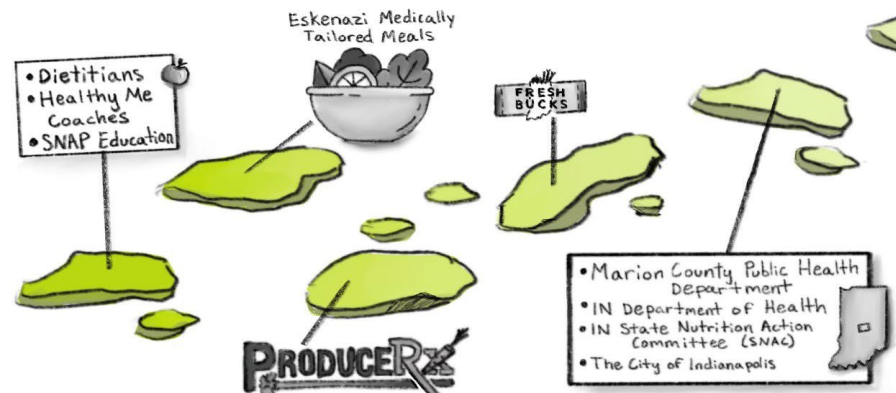
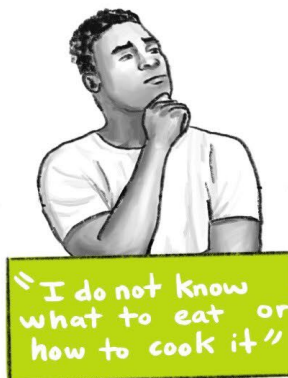
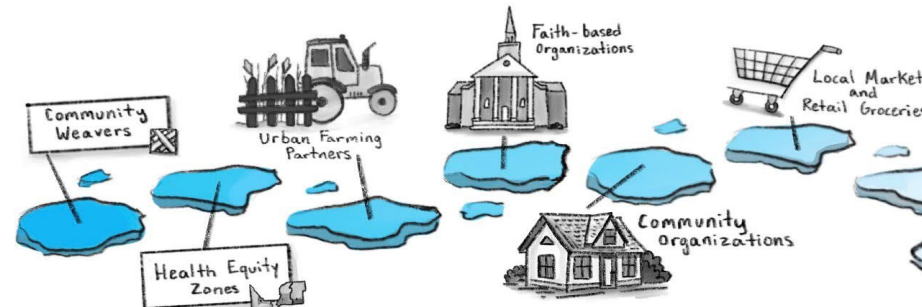


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G L E A N E R S

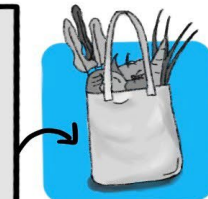


FOOD AS MEDICINE

Better Nutrition For Better Health



Fresh for You Market

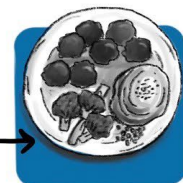


Neighborhood Nutrition Access and Food Sovereignty

Eskenazi Health
Fresh For You Market



30
Grocery Voucher



Food Security and Nutrition Independence



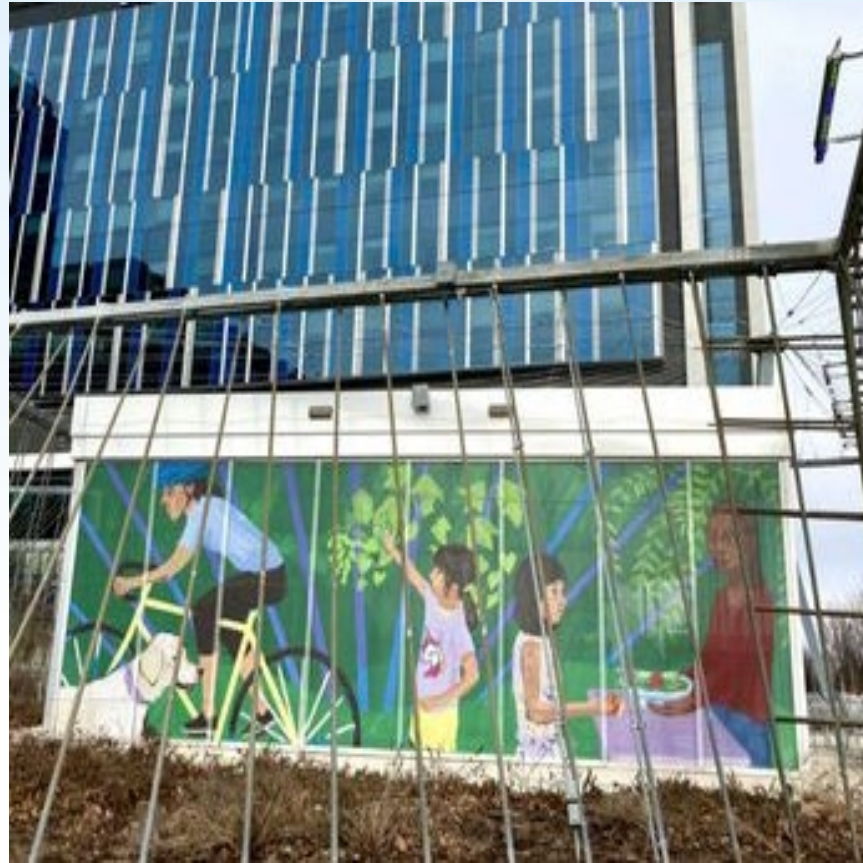
Fresh for You Market on wheels



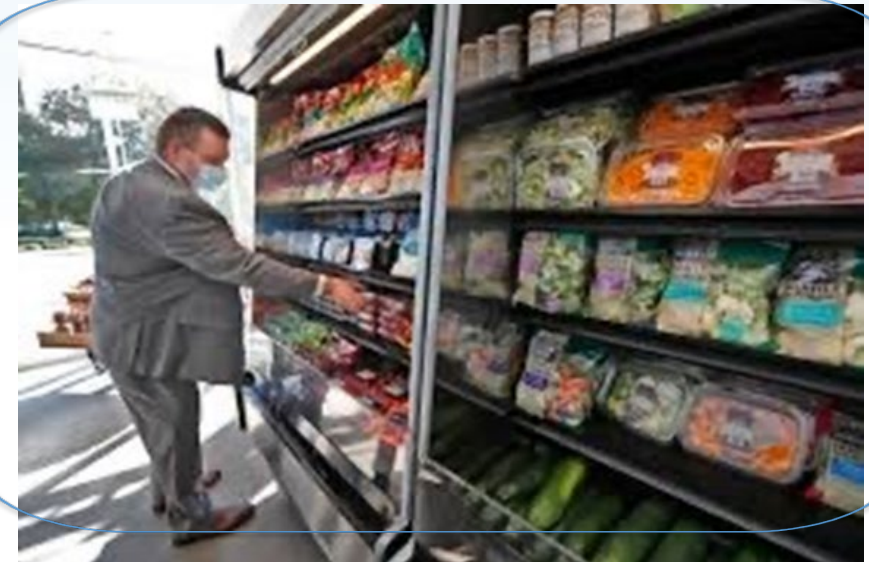
Nutrition and Cooking Confidence

Food is Health: Fresh For You Market Response

- **Pantry-** \$30 dollar vouchers for patients that screen positive for food insecurity
- **Market-** Traditional market grocery sales contribute to fund voucher program
- **Nutrition-** Nutrition education and programming opportunities



- Accepting SNAP
- Accepting “Fresh for You Market Vouchers”
- Medically Tailored Meals Options
- Culturally Tailored Food Options
- Community Choice Food Options



Food is Health: Fresh For You Market on Wheels



Technical Innovation- Automated Food Vouchers

PREPAID ESKENAZI HEALTH

Redeem this coupon for up to **\$30** towards any grocery items from the Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market at the Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion or the Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market on Wheels.

Not valid for grab-and-go foods or made-to-order meals



Con este cupón usted puede obtener hasta un valor de **\$30** en alimentos en el mercado Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market que está en el pabellón Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion o en el mercado sobre ruedas Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market on Wheels.

Este cupón no es válido con las comidas listas para llevar (grab-and-go) o a la carta (made-to-order meals).

Itilize koupon sa pou you montan jiska **\$30** pou nenpòt pwodui alimentè nan makèt Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market nan paviyon Frank & Katrina Basile Pavilion oswa nan makèt sou lari yo Eskenazi Health Fresh for You Market on Wheels.

Pa valab pou manje a anpòt oswa manje ki prepare sou kòman.



LEI, La Plaza

ESKENAZI HEALTH

Grocery Coupon

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V8-B22

Patient completes
food insecurity
screening

Patient receives
AVS information

Patient receives voucher
for Fresh for You Market

Patient receives referral to
Dietitian, CHW, Social Work,
SNAP Outreach etc

Patient redeems voucher
for Fresh for You Market



Workflow changes
Cultural changes
Technical changes

Workforce Expansion

New pantry resources

Closed Loop Capture back into EHR

A unique serial number
identifier for a specific
patient visit or encounter

Crooked Creek Food Pantry

- Opened February 11, 2015
- Partnership of Eskenazi Health, Corteva AgriSciences, St. Luke's United Methodist Church and Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana
- Located at Eskenazi Health Center Pecar
- 4th largest food pantry in Marion County
- Serving ~5,000+ families/monthly (60,000/yr)
- Utilizes over 180 volunteers per week
- Distributes around 40% produce



Food is Medicine



Crooked Creek Food Pantry
Address: 6940 N Michigan Rd
Indianapolis, Indiana
Phone: (317) 471-9064

Good nutrition is key to good health. Visit the food pantry for nutritious food to support an active, healthy lifestyle.

Date Issued: _____

Pantry Received Date: _____

Hours of Operation

Visit the pantry website at ccfpindy.org for more information, including days and times for shopping at the pantry.

This form is provided by Eskenazi Health Center Pecar to refer you and your household to services at Crooked Creek Food Pantry. Please present this form when you register at the food pantry.

ESKENAZI
HEALTH

0001

Referring Provider Signature _____



EHC “Food is Medicine” with Crooked Creek Food Pantry since 2019

Dietitians, Doctors, Medical Assistants and Food Pantry Volunteers come together for FIM group visits inside Crooked Creek Food Pantry.



Reinoso et al. Addressing Food Insecurity: Lessons Learned from Co-Locating a Food Pantry with a Federally Qualified Health Center. *Int J Integr Care*. 2022

Gleaners Foodbank Partnership with Gleaners 2 Go Food Distributions

- Partnership with Gleaners Food Bank
- 3 participating health centers
- Weekly food distributions
- Custom ordered groceries



Patient enrolled at Health Center → Patient orders food on G2G app → Food delivered to Health Center → Grocery Pick-up

Fresh Food Pharmacy at Grace Health

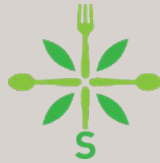
Kirby Lee, RDN

Kristine Nakashima, Food Pharmacy Coordinator



Program Details

- Partnership



SOUTH MICHIGAN
FOOD BANK

food
BANK
COUNCIL OF MICHIGAN

- Chronic disease diagnosis + food insecurity
- Readiness for change





Program Details

- Receive food twice a month
- Attend coaching once a month
- Biometrics & surveys completed prior to start and upon completion
- Independent program evaluations

Program 1

- home delivery
- 9 months

Program 2

- choice pantry at Grace Health
- 6 months



Lessons



Success beyond biometrics

- Compliance- medications, provider visits, labs, diabetic appointments
- Investment in their own healthcare

Value of coaching

- Ongoing support specific to patient
- Patient leads goal-setting

Lessons

Team approach

- Multi-department support within FQHC
- Relationship with South MI Food Bank

IT support

- Templates built in EMR
- Tracking and data collection



Future Planning



Additional Wellness Outreach

- Movement classes
- Group support

Additional Sourcing

- Local foods, to alleviate burden on food bank
- ILOS via Medicaid health plans

Questions

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Kristine Nakashima

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FOOD FOR HEALTH AT COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS: Policy

Erin Prendergast, MPH
Director of Federal Policy



Policy Opportunities

to Expand Food for Health Programs within Community Health Centers

Food Access & Security

Screening for food and nutrition insecurity and addressing systemic barriers to access.

Clinical Integration

Embedding medically indicated food-based nutritional interventions into healthcare settings to prevent, manage, and treat chronic diseases for eligible patients.

Nutrition & Lifestyle Approaches

Promoting a whole-person approach while empowering people with the cooking skills and nutrition knowledge needed for long-term health self-management. This includes CHC workforce training

Legislative

Administrative

Legislative Policy Ideas

**Authorize a new
MAHA Centers of
Excellence Program
for Community
Health Centers**



**Nutrition Services as
Required CHC Service**



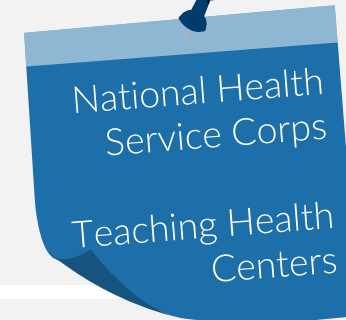
**HHS and USDA
Strategic Plan**

**Evaluate the Impact
of CHCs on
Maintaining Patient
Access to Nutrition
Programs**

Expanded research to explore how CHCs can be better integrated with federal nutrition programs.

Workforce

strengthening the workforce pipeline through education on the role of nutrition services in primary care delivery and expanding the recruitment and training of nutrition professionals



**Community kitchens in all CHCs or
nearby partner organizations**

to improve community wellbeing by providing resources, peer support, and culinary skills training.



Virtual-Enrollment in WIC

reduce barriers to low-income families' enrollment in nutrition programs like WIC.



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@NACHC    

Legislative Policy Ideas

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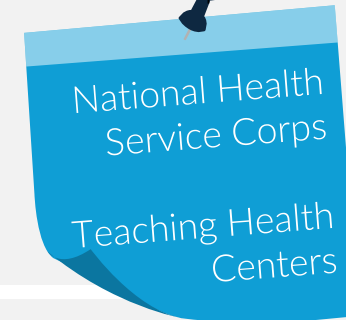
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Health Workforce Innovation Act

The bill would authorize new HRSA workforce grants to CHCs and RHCs to support apprenticeships, career laddering & precepting for:

- medical assistants
- dental hygienists
- pharmacy technicians
- dieticians
- community health workers
- and other allied health professions (clinical and non-clinical)



Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) reintroduced **S.4254**, the *Health Workforce Innovation Act*, companion to the bipartisan House bill, **H.R. 935**

Food for Health Funding Opportunities



\$125 million for Expanded Nutrition Services (ENS):

Funding to support **350+** community health centers in expanding nutrition services and food-based interventions within primary care to prevent and manage chronic diseases

FY27 President's Budget:

Proposes \$19 million in funding for **50 CHCs** to expand nutrition services

Administrative Policy Ideas



Expanding Advisory Opinion from HHS Office of Inspector General (OIG)

creating safe harbor guidance to ensure that Food for Health can be delivered without violating the Anti-Kickback law



Medical Loss Ratio (MLR)

Food for Health services be included as part of the clinical services in the MLR in Medicaid, Marketplace plans, and commercial plans

Advance Food for Health by updating the Uniform Data System and reporting guidance



1. Add standardized fields
2. Include metrics of involvement with Food for Health and federal food assistance programs
3. Encourage integration of Food for Health-relevant data into the EHR systems through standardized data definitions and interoperability with PRAPARE©
4. Standardized Screening
5. Pilot a Food for Health supplemental module within the Uniform Data System

Questions?

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Kirby Lee, RDN

Registered Dietician

Grace Health

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Evaluation



Upcoming Session Dates

Join us for the full Food 4 Health Promising Practices Learning Series:

- **April 23, 2026** – Supporting Nutritional and Lifestyle Approaches at the Individual Level



THANK YOU!



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PLEASE VISIT US ONLINE

nachc.org