

Addressing Food Insecurity & Diabetes in the Community Setting

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Feeding America

Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation

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Communities Uniting to Meet America's Diabetes Challenge

Feeding America Project Goals and Summary

Food Bank-HealthCare Partnership Goals:

- Better understand the connection between food insecurity and diabetes
- Demonstrate the role that food banks can play in partnership with healthcare organizations for community-based diabetes care

Patient Goals:

- Improve food security and access to healthy food
- Increase access to and utilization of healthcare resources
- Increase diabetes self-management skills
- Improve glycemic control

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Patient Story: Referral from Healthcare Provider to Food Bank: Mrs. G

- 61-year-old woman referred from a free clinic
- HbA1c of 12.7% at the free clinic. Had improved to 7.9% but clinic staff identified food insecurity as a challenge to diabetes management.
- Mrs. G wanted to eat healthier to manage her diabetes. Enrolled in the REFB program and received monthly food boxes at a distribution in Santa Rosa.
- Participated in the 4-week “Cooking for Health” classes.
- Final HbA1c was 6.1%. Mrs. G attributes her success to changes in eating that she learned from Cooking for Health and because she had access to healthier foods.
- Mrs. G is now a patient at FQHC and feels very optimistic and confident about her future.

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Patient Story - Referral from the Food Bank to Healthcare Partner: Miss B

- Woman in her 40s with known type 2 diabetes came to food pantry with her father who heard about the diabetes program. Uninsured, no physician, wasn't taking medication.
- HbA1c >13.0% and RBS > 600mg/dl, made referral to a Free clinic MD and gave diabetes food box
- Started insulin, returned each month for food boxes and education materials
- After 6 months, HbA1c 7.4% and Miss B was enthusiastic about sharing the health changes she had made. "I feel like a new person!"

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Feeding America Project Results

- Food Banks created partnerships with FQHCs, hospitals, free clinics, private MD offices
 - Provided healthy food, relevant education, and connections to healthcare system
 - Client Pre-post client outcomes showed improvements:
 - Blood Sugar Control
 - Medication adherence,
 - Diabetes specific self-efficacy
 - F & V intake
 - Challenges with medication affordability
 - Diabetes distress
 - Depressive symptoms
- all $p < .001$

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Feeding America Lessons Learned

- Food Is Medicine
- Food Banks can be effective partners for healthcare organizations to offer diabetes screening and self-management education & support
- Standard diabetes education programs may need to be adapted to address food insecurity and the challenges that low-income people face

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