

Food, Health, Hope (FHH) Program: An Answer to Diabetes

Provide access to free health screenings and disease prevention/management for individuals with diabetes, hypertension, and obesity at food pantries in Northern New Jersey

Why It Matters

Diabetes is the sixth leading cause of death in New Jersey and disproportionately impacts people of color. FHH program data from 2019-2021 documented that 70-80% of food pantry clients requesting cardio-metabolic screening had at least one chronic condition (diabetes, hypertension, and/or diabetes). In addition, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) projects a 14.1% shortage of primary care physicians in New Jersey by 2025.

Solution

Summit Health Cares, in partnership with local food pantries, provides health screenings, impactful tools, and culturally appropriate health education to populations at increased risk of suffering from type 2 diabetes.

- Provides individuals with biometric assessments (quarterly HbA1c, monthly blood pressure and BMI), one on one counseling and care management with culturally appropriate health education for prediabetes, diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.
- Program partner, Community Foodbank of NJ, provides all program participants with monthly supplemental “diabetes boxes”; one box with shelf stable, low sugar and sodium alternatives, and one box with fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and medical assistants support the program and check in with all participants on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Volunteer Summit Health/City MD clinical practitioners assist in monthly screenings and specialty screenings such as podiatry and pharmaceutical counseling.



Impact

Improved health outcomes of underserved patients through increased access to care and connection to resources.



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Program expanded to **13 food pantries**, allowing for the addition of **700 patients** enrolled and gaining access to healthy food, screening, education, and accessible care



Increased from quarterly to monthly check-ins for participants, **tripling** the average enrollee’s time with a healthcare professional



Utilized GetInsulin.org to provide **insulin affordability solutions** to participants

Key Learnings

Meeting patients where they are is critical: By using data to make the connection that many individuals at risk-for chronic diseases are also food-insecure and spend time at food pantries to meet essential needs, Summit Health Cares was able to improve their care.

