

LHD CONNECT

May

2023



Food is Medicine - Addressing Food Insecurity in Riverside County

Background

The Riverside County CalFresh Healthy Living Local Health Department – Riverside University Health System (RUHS) – utilized health screenings and a partnership with Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino to provide food boxes to patients who self-identified as food insecure.

Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino was awarded funding from the Food is Medicine program. Only seven food banks across the nation were awarded funding. The Food is Medicine program was originally funded by Anthem Foundation, the philanthropy work of Blue Cross Insurance Company, and since transitioning to Food Rx in 2022 this work is now funded through another source at Feeding America.

Screening for Food Insecurity

The goal of both programs is to have federally qualified health centers screen patients for food insecurity using the Hunger Vital Signs screening tool available in the Epic Electronic Health Record. The program coordinator and health center physician decided to screen all adult patients visiting the Riverside University Health System - Community Health Center

in Moreno Valley. Most healthcare facilities only screen for insecurity during pediatric health clinic visits.

The screening tool was slightly changed to ask patients if they worried about running out of food and if they worried about not having enough money to buy food within the past 30 days instead of the standard time frame of within the last 12 months. The idea is to immediately address patient needs so a food box can be given the same day of the clinic visit. This service is essential to patients that may not have access to transportation to return to the health clinic. If interested, patients are eligible to receive a food box monthly and can pick one up Monday through Friday during clinic business hours.

The health coaches and student volunteers from the University of California Riverside School of Medicine were given access to Epic and called to remind patients participating in Food Rx to pick up their food boxes each month. Any healthcare staff, including the security guard, can issue a food box to a patient at the health clinic. All staff are aware of the protocol for the food box distribution and have access to the list of patients participating in the Food Rx program.

Creating New Opportunities

After a 14 month delay due to COVID -19, November 9, 2021, marked the launch of the highly anticipated Food is Medicine program at the Riverside University Health System – Community Health Center (RUHS – CHC) in Moreno Valley.

Ten months later, the now Food Rx program has created another opportunity to expand efforts to increase access to food for low-income residents in Riverside County. CalFresh Healthy Living (RUHS), the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, the Office on Aging, Feeding America Riverside | San Bernardino, and Door Dash have partnered to launch the Homebound Emergency Relief Outreach (HERO) program. WIC sites throughout Riverside County will serve as food box hubs for homebound seniors (age 60 and older) and disabled adults. Door Dash started delivering the food boxes for the HERO and Food Rx programs in November 2022.


The HERO program will allow the RUHS and the Office on Aging to partner beyond the COVID - 19 emergency response. Their combined efforts will increase outreach, especially within the eastern region of Riverside County that includes the city of Blythe, which borders Arizona. Due to the distance, servicing this area remains a challenge for many Riverside County agencies.

Impact

This year, 870 food boxes were distributed to patients visiting the RUHS - CHC in Moreno Valley. The food boxes are stored in a micro-mini conference room adjacent to the lobby, so patients can quickly receive their boxes in a comfortable environment.

One advantage of providing food boxes within a healthcare setting is the convenience. Patients do not have to wait in long lines outdoors at food pantries across the region. This is especially helpful since in the Inland Empire there can be extreme heat.

The original plan was to have four RUHS – CHC's participate in the Food is Medicine Program, but the efforts were scaled back to a single health clinic due to the COVID - 19 response efforts in Riverside County.

The Food Rx program was at risk of losing funding and having to end the food box distribution. However, RUHS explored alternative funding sources to continue providing food boxes for patients receiving primary care at the RUHS - Community Health Center in Moreno Valley. Ultimately, RUHS successfully found an additional two years of funding through Feeding America. This will sustain the Food as Medicine intervention' 



Nutrition Policy Institute General Announcements

DUE June 30, 2023: FFY 2023 Impact Outcome Evaluation (IOE) deliverables

Deliverables include:

1. Entering all pre/post EATS data into the online survey (Tiers 1-5)
2. Submitting updated Planning Worksheets to Amanda (Tiers 3+)
3. Entering all SLAQs into Survey123 (Tiers 3+)

June 30th is a firm deadline to complete these activities.

SAVE THE DATES:

Upcoming Cross-Project Evaluation Office Hours

June 15, 2023 at 11am.

Bring any questions about SLAQs, PEARS, IOE or Adult Direct Education Evaluation

Register in advance for this meeting on the LHD Evaluation Cross-Project OHs webpage:

[Registration](#)

FFY 2024 Eating and Activity Tool for Students Survey Administration Training (IOE Quarterly Call)

Tuesday, July 18th at 10am.

Join by Computer: [Zoom Meeting](#)

Join by Phone: +1 669 900 6833, Meeting ID: 916 445 6311

School District Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (OAQ) Live Webinar Training
August 1, 2023 from 10:30am-12pm

During this live webinar training, you will learn:


The purpose of the OAQ

How is it different from SLAQ and other evaluation and reporting tools

When a school district needs to complete an OAQ

What information is collected with the OAQ

How and when to complete the OAQ

What resources are available to help with OAQ administration 




SNAC COMMUNITY GARDENS INITIATIVE LAUNCHES POLICY TOOLKIT TO SUPPORT LOCAL COMMUNITY GARDEN ADVOCATES

California's [State Nutrition Action Council \(SNAC\)](#) recognizes that navigating the policies and systems governing community gardens can be challenging, which is why its members have combined their community engagement and nutrition education expertise to develop three critical tools:

- 1) [Fact Sheet](#) lists the proven benefits of community gardens,
- 2) [Issue Brief](#) discusses the role of local and state policies in governing them, and the
- 3) [Planning Guide](#) details key considerations for creating and sustaining these spaces.

Local policymakers and decision-makers are encouraged to download these tools to better understand the benefits that community gardens offer or to develop community gardens themselves. Together, these tools help community leaders cut through red tape, select proven policy models, and deliver health benefits to residents living in areas that have been historically underserved.

NEW!! Please visit the regularly updated [SNAC Community Gardens Initiative webpage](#) to learn more about this initiative and to access these tools!

SNAC is a state-level collaborative with active representation from all state agencies and nonprofits that implement USDA Food and Nutrition programs. SNAC works collectively to improve the health of Californians, especially those with limited resources. Each year, SNAC members select a new or existing initiative of focus. In 2022, SNAC launched a Community Gardens Initiative to promote local neighborhood gardens across California. 





California Department of Public Health Connection

CalFresh Healthy Living, California Department of Public Health Training and Events Calendar

Search this site

CalFresh Healthy Living Training Resources

Training Update

Check out the CDPH [Training & Events webpage](#) for the latest training information and calendar of scheduled events.

LHD Learning Community

June 14, 2023

Evaluation Cross Project Office Hours

June 15, 2023

Impact Outcome Evaluation Quarterly Call

July 18, 2023

CalFresh Healthy Living 2023 Forum (Hosted by CDSS)

October 23-25, 2023

LHD Learning Communities – 3rd and 4th Quarter!

Two dynamic and engaging virtual events will be held later this year to support learning, networking, and resource sharing with your CDPH local agency community.

We want to hear from you!

Do you have a specific topic or activity you would like to learn more about? Let the CDPH Team know by emailing us at NEOPBTrainingSection@cdph.ca.gov.


ToP Strategic Planning Interest Survey

Interested in a ToP Strategic Planning course to take your organization and community beyond action plans to navigate more complex change? If so, please complete this short [survey](#) to express your interest! Possible training dates are subject to interest in the summer months. Stay tuned!



CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training Resources

For information regarding CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training events and resources, email CFHLStatewideTraining@leahspantry.org. and visit:

- [CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training Resources](#)
- [CalFresh Healthy Living Statewide Training Learning Platform](#) 




Small Bites of Knowledge – Nutrition Standards in Schools

Your CalFresh Healthy Living program knowledge and experience may help other agencies address and work through program challenges. To support knowledge and resource sharing, occasionally we will publish articles in the LHD Connect newsletter to ask for your insight on different program topics and publish an aggregate of responses in subsequent articles to share with other local agency partners.

In the October LHD Connect newsletter, we asked about implementing [Smarter Mealtimes](#) and in November, we inquired about [Direct Education](#). This month, we are interested in hearing from you on *Nutrition Standards in Schools*.

Nutrition Standards in Schools – Small Bites of Knowledge

How do you approach nutrition standards in schools when working with school food service staff, given the nutrition standards set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture? Share your tips via [Padlet](#) today! 



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