

A Roadmap for Launching a

Food Farmacy Program

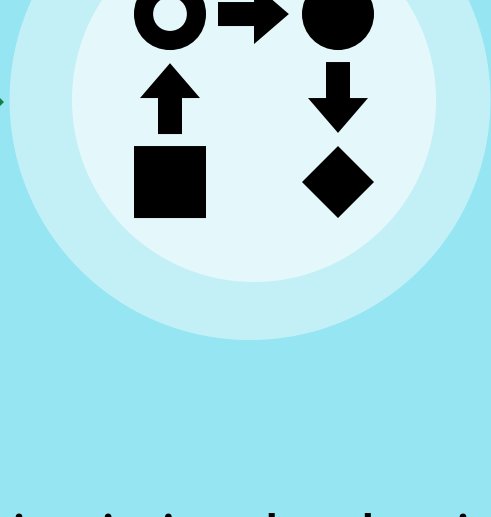
Results from Three Years of Food Farmacy Work:

- 2021: Southern Peigan Health Center with Ō'yō'·p' (FAST Blackfeet) Food Pantry
- 2022: Community Health Partners Belgrade with Bar 1 Wellness; St Peter's Health with Helena Food Share; and Partnership Health Center with Missoula Food Bank and Community Center
- 2023: Logan Health Clinics 70, 705, and 1280 with Land to Hand Montana and Flathead Food Bank

Project Goals:

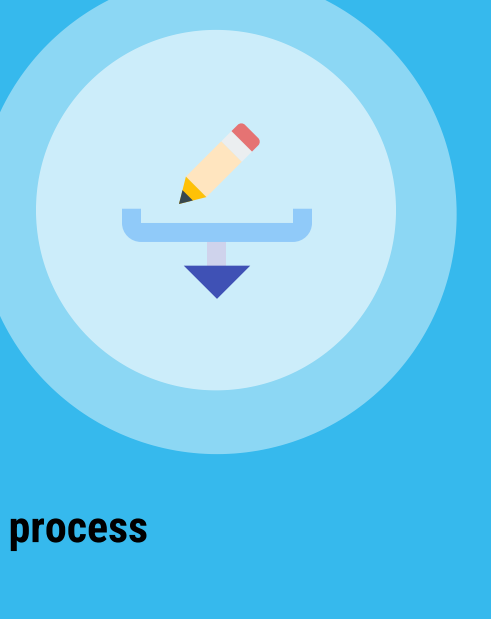
- Helping food insecure patients with diagnosed high blood pressure (HBP) or high cholesterol (HChol) access healthier food resources through a local food pantry or food bank.
- Establishing team-based care workflows to improve patient health outcomes.

1 Establish Identification Criteria for Patient Population



- Patient meets food insecurity criteria such as those in the **Hunger Vital Sign™** Questionnaire
 - Method of determining food insecurity is up to the clinic and the food pantry or food bank in partnership with each other.
- Patient meets HBP or HChol criteria by diagnosis or recent high values
- Refer qualifying patients to:
 - Partnering food pantry for healthy food, food preparation, and nutrition education.
 - Additional available community and clinical supports, including registered dietitians, National Diabetes Prevention Program Lifestyle Coaches, Medical Nutrition Therapy, cooking classes, yoga, and other partnering programs.

2 Develop a Workflow that Works for All Partners



- Establish patient screening process
 - See above
 - Establish a referral and tracking process
 - Determine whether patients will be referred and tracked electronically or manually.
 - If electronically, refer and track via chosen referral system.
 - If manually, create a referral form with pantry or bank and food pick-up information and provide to each patient.
 - Health center/clinic:
 1. keeps spreadsheet to track referred patient data.
 2. ensures designated pantry or bank staff know a patient has been referred, including contact information.
 3. shares referrals with internal support partners and external partners through appropriate mechanisms (e.g., HIPAA compliant, secure).
 - At health center/clinic, designated staff notifies primary care physician through appropriate mechanism to approve referral.
 - Establish food delivery system
 - Food pantry or food bank determines best way for patients to acquire food (pick-up or delivery).
 - Food offered must include heart-healthy options. Quantities and types will vary by food pantry or food bank.
 - When patient picks up food, staff tell them about the food pantry or food bank, provide recipes and other supports as agreed on.
 - Food pantry staff communicate regularly with health center to confirm patients who have and have not picked up box.
 - Designated staff contacts patient if they don't go to food pantry within a specified timeframe.
1. Refer to "Food Banks as Partners in Health Promotion" for HIPAA compliance.

3 Make the Journey Easier: Points to Consider



- Communication
 - Build trust through finding ways to maintain regular communication to build a strong working relationship. Consider all partners' schedules, staffing, and program priorities.
 - "Seamless communication...requires constant attention."
- Technology
 - Agree to use platforms that are most comfortable for all partners and will help with communication and record-keeping while maintaining HIPAA compliance.
- Food Sourcing
 - Food pantry or food bank staff may need to find new food sources required for heart-healthy options. Check current order system and alternate partners (e.g., suppliers to schools).
- Patient Uptake
 - Might be reluctant, or there may be barriers to participation. A follow-up call can help, and modifications to food pick-up may be warranted.

4 Share Results and Promote Project



- Patients
 - Project incentivized participation in patients' own health improvement.
 - Patients felt empowered by a team caring for their health.
 - "Awareness and sensitivity in patient centered care is a must for addressing food insecurity."
- Team
 - Project was a great chance to build a community health team and expand health resources for patients.
 - "It makes sense to work together to mobilize resources to care for our community. Our...community will be better if we continue to work together."

