

**2024 HAP Achievement Award
Living the Vision Award**

Penn Medicine Lancaster General Hospital

One-Stop Shopping: Food Farmacy Program Pairs Nutrition Counseling with Access to Healthy Food

The Goal

The program's goals:

- Improve nutrition-related knowledge, skills, and dietary habits among patients who are also experiencing food insecurity
- Improve health outcomes (blood pressure, body mass index and waist circumference, cholesterol, and HbA1C levels) among participants
- Ensure that all community food pantries that serve as Food Farmacy locations offer a choice of healthy products for all clients

Intervention

Patients referred to the program are matched with a registered dietitian at a community food pantry near them. During the intake appointment, patients complete baseline assessments of their nutrition knowledge, health needs, eating habits, and preferences. They also receive personalized education resources, measuring cups and spoons, and reusable grocery bags.

During the next 12 months, the patient meets regularly with the same dietitian and receives free one-on-one nutrition counseling and a package of healthy foods for their family. Upon completion, patients are enrolled in the services of the pantry and receive healthy foods during the pantry's normal distribution.





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Results

The program has distributed a total of 38,826 pounds of food since it began. Among the patients who have completed the program:

- 60 percent of the graduates reported increased confidence in their nutrition skills
- 73 percent reported improved healthy eating habits
- 49 percent reported decreased food insecurity

These behavior changes have also led to measurable changes in health outcomes. Overall:

- 66 percent of the graduates had improved blood pressure
- 71 percent decreased waist circumference
- 59 percent experienced weight loss
- 56 percent improved hemoglobin A1c
- 62 percent improved triglycerides
- 60 percent improved HDL cholesterol

The hospital has received positive feedback from providers, patients, and community partners since the program began.