

**2024 HAP Achievement Award
Community Champions—Large Division
St. Luke’s University Health Network**

Utilizing Strategic Partnerships and Sustainable Initiatives to Improve Food Access and Address Health Equity for Underserved Communities

The Goal

The program’s goal was to improve sustainable food access initiatives for underserved populations by establishing and/or maintaining a food access hub with key partners in 100 percent of the health network’s high-need locations, serving more than 140 households a month per location.

Intervention

The first component of the model assesses food insecurity through screenings. Activities were steered by data obtained from the recent Community Health Needs Assessment.

Working directly with individual communities aided in the understanding unique perspectives and needs.

Utilizing the Feeding America framework, food access was addressed in various ways including:

- Referrals to existing food bank programs and food pantries
- Connection to SNAP, WIC, and other food programs
- Hosting new food distribution programs (including on-site pantries, mobile food distribution, and emergency food bags, boxes, and meals)





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Results

All (100%) of the high-need communities identified in the network’s service area have established food access initiatives. Additionally, since the COVID-19 pandemic, new food access sites have increased by 67 percent. Each location serves more than 140 households per month, with some serving more than 200 households monthly.

During fiscal year 2023, the online platform utilized to support and promote food access had a total of 22,183 searches, with the majority (28.5%) being individuals looking for food access (e.g., food pantries). Also during fiscal year 2023, the network’s initiative served 5,456 meals to children and adults, a nearly 25 percent increase from fiscal year 2022, during which 4,417 meals were served.