

# Food as Medicine

Policies and programs integrating healthy food access as a core component of health care

District of Columbia  
Food Policy Council



DC | HEALTH  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

## SCREEN AND INTERVENE

Food insecurity screenings are tailored questions about a patient's food consumption that determine if the individual is food secure or insecure. Food insecurity screenings most often lead to referrals to services and organizations that can help patients access healthy, no or low cost food.

(ex) DC WIC Clinic's On-Site Mobile Markets, Arkansas Children's Hospital's On-Site WIC Clinic



## PRODUCE PRESCRIPTION PROGRAMS

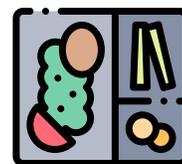
Fruit and vegetable or produce prescription programs allow healthcare providers to provide food insecure patients with "prescriptions" for fruits and vegetables that can be spent at grocery stores or farmer's markets. They are multi-sector partnerships between health providers, government agencies, and healthy food retailers.

(ex) DC Greens' Produce Rx

## MEDICALLY TAILORED MEALS

Medically tailored meals (MTMs) are meals tailored to an individual's medical condition(s) by a registered dietitian or qualified nutrition professional, such as diabetic or renal meals, and include medical nutrition therapy (MNT). In many instances, MTMs and groceries are delivered directly to the home.

(ex) Food & Friends Home Delivered Meals, Mom's Meals Home Delivered Meals



## FOOD PHARMACY/PANTRY

While relatively new to the food as medicine landscape, food pharmacy/pantry programs integrate health, wellness, and social service consultations for food insecure patients referred by a physician. Food pharmacies/pantries provide healthy, fresh food to patients, usually with diet-related illnesses.

(ex) Geisinger's Food Farmacy, Boston Medical Center's Preventative Food Pantry

## OTHER INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Organizations are working to integrate other health services, like health screenings and nutrition education, to the places where people shop or receive food assistance. In addition, other food as medicine programs combine their interventions with medical nutrition therapy (MNT), which usually involves a nutrition assessment and counseling specific to an individual's illnesses, including diet-related illnesses.

(ex) UCSF Pilot Food Bank Intervention, Medi-Cal MTM Pilot Program

