

Foreword on Moving Forward

Language about **identity, diversity, equity, and inclusion** evolves relatively quickly. The language and terms used throughout this course reflect contemporary best practice and guidance. To ensure continuous alignment with current best practice, terminology will be reviewed and updated as guidelines evolve. For example, when color is used regarding race, capital letters are used (e.g., Black, White, Brown), as recommended by the National Association of Black Journalists



Nourishing Communities Part 1:

*What is Food is Medicine? The Latest
on National Initiatives*

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE 1

Identify the impact of Food is Medicine approaches on health care disparities

Food Insecurity in the United States

47.4 million
people living in
food-insecure
houses¹

\$172 billion
spent on obesity
in a single year²

\$2,456
extra in annual
healthcare
expenditures for
food-insecure
families³

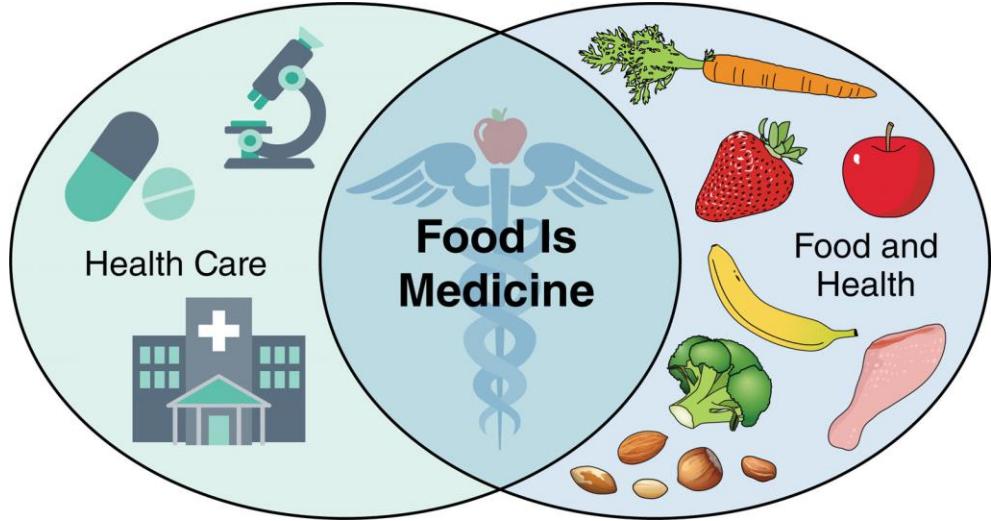
Diet-related chronic diseases in Americans:⁴

38% pre-diabetes 11.3% diabetes 37% cardiovascular disease

1. Rabbit MP, et al. *ERS Research Report*. 2024: Number 337. 2. Ward ZJ, et al. *PLoS One*. 2021;16(3):e0247307. 3. Palakshappa D, et al. *Health Affairs*. 2023;42(1):44-52. 4. Matthews ED, et al. *Front Pub Health*. 2024;12.

What is Food is Medicine?

- Access to high-quality nourishment is essential for well-being
- Supports immediate and long-term resources for people, communities, and systems
- Focused on the intersections of food systems and healthcare to improve clinical outcomes



“Food is Medicine is the provision of healthy food to prevent, manage, or treat specific clinical conditions in a way that is integrated with the health care sector”

Nutrition Principles for Population Health

Recognizes that nourishment is essential for good health, well-being, and resilience

- Nourishment is essential to physical, mental, social, and behavioral health across the course of life

Facilitates easy access to healthy food across the health continuum in the community

- Designed to support health promotion, disease prevention, and chronic and acute condition management

Cultivates understanding of the relationship between nutrition and health

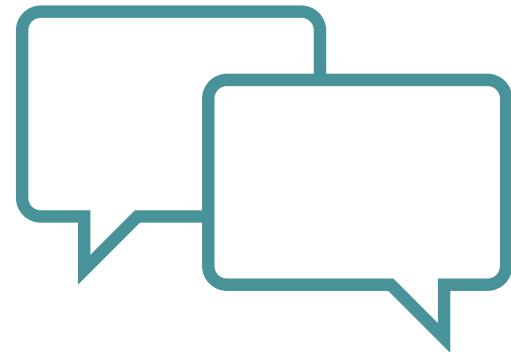
- Fosters integration of nutrition education throughout healthcare and human service delivery and training
- Recognizes the impact of social determinants/drivers of health (SDoH)

Unites partners with diverse assets to build sustained and integrated solutions.

Invests in the capacity of under-resourced communities.

- Equitable access to resources to enable all communities to support meaningful solutions

Faculty Discussion





LEARNING OBJECTIVE **2**

Implement actionable strategies for the multidisciplinary care team to integrate Food is Medicine into practice

Food is Medicine Policies

Health and Human Services¹

- [Food is Medicine Virtual Toolkit](https://www.gih.org/philanthropy-work/featured/hhs-launches-new-food-is-medicine-virtual-toolkit) to support community efforts to design and implement Food Is Medicine interventions

White House²

- Released a call to action to end hunger and reduce the prevalence of chronic disease in the United States by 2030

Insurance³

- Some insurance programs are beginning to reimburse food-as-medicine programs as part of their coverage, though they often focus on diabetes and heart disease

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS]. Food Is Medicine Virtual Toolkit. HHS Website. 2024. <https://www.gih.org/philanthropy-work/featured/hhs-launches-new-food-is-medicine-virtual-toolkit>. 2. White House. *The Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \$1.7 Billion in New Commitments Cultivated Through the White House Challenge to End Hunger and Build Healthy Communities*. White House Website. 2024. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/02/27/fact-sheet-the-biden-harris-administration-announces-nearly-1-7-billion-in-new-commitments-cultivated-through-the-white-house-challenge-to-end-hunger-and-build-healthy-communities>. 3. Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina. *Food-as-medicine program resulted in better outcomes for diabetes patients*. Fierce Healthcare Website. 2023. <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/payers/north-carolina-blues-plan-says-food-medicine-program-resulted-better-outcomes-diabetes>.

Medicaid Program Innovations

- Section 1115 of the Social Security Act allows approval of experimental, pilot, or demonstration programs¹
- Used to test new approaches in Medicaid
- HHS approved several nutrition intervention Food is Medicine programs in Oregon, Arkansas, Massachusetts, and North Carolina²

“The food boxes have saved our life. The food is amazing. The process is so helpful. There has never been a government program that has worked so well” – Participant³

1. Social Security Administration [SSA]. Social Security Act §1115. SSA Website. 2024. https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title11/1115.htm. 2. Sarone S. Medicaid Testing 'Food as Medicine' Program in Some States—How Could It Impact Health? Health.com Website. 2023. <https://www.health.com/medicaid-food-as-medicine-7152259>. 3. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Significant Cost Savings Realized as Healthy Opportunities Pilots Reach Two-Year Anniversary. NCDHHS Website. 2024. <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/blog/2024/05/21/significant-cost-savings-realized-healthy-opportunities-pilots-reach-two-year-anniversary>.

Food is Medicine Programs in Action

Indian Health Service (IHS) Produce Prescription Pilot Program¹

- American Indian and Alaska Native people disproportionately impacted by food insecurity
- \$2.5 million in 2023 to decrease food insecurity in Native communities
- \$500,000 each to 5 tribal organizations to implement produce prescription programs

NIH Stimulating Research to Understand and Address Hunger, Food, and Nutrition Insecurity²

- Grant program to encourage research on efficacy of nutrition security interventions
- Development of new measures for nutrition security and assessment of food insecurity

Administration for Community Living³

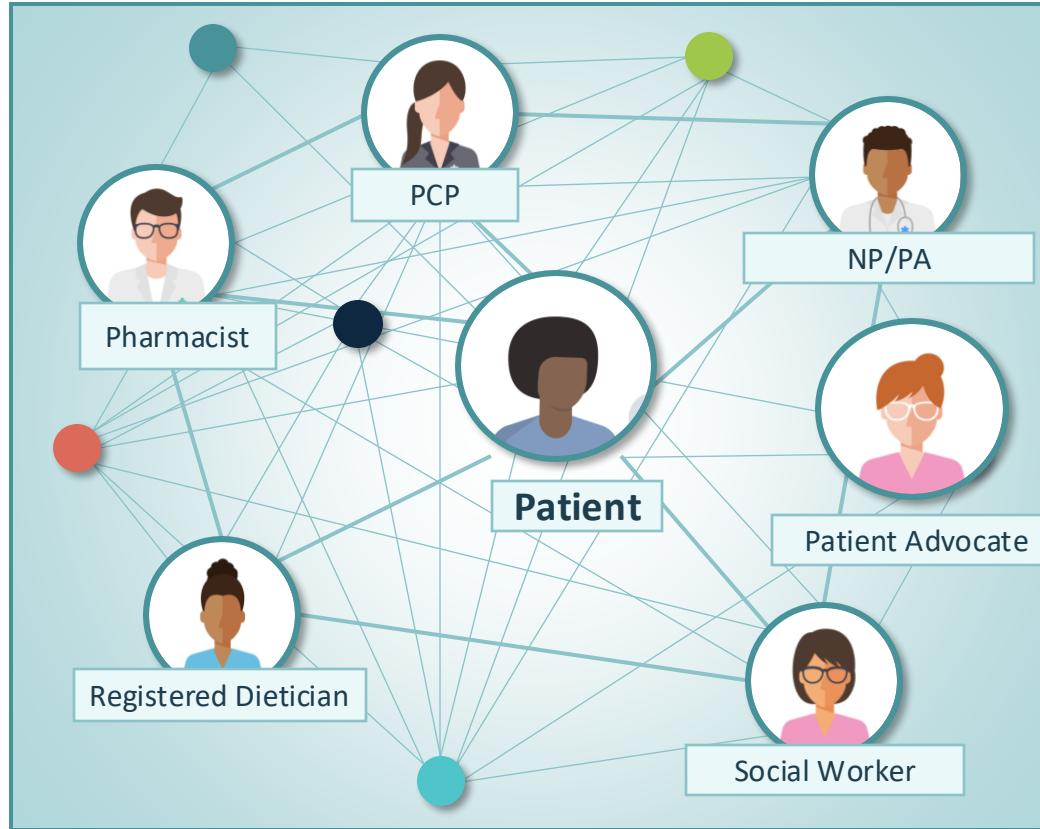
- Public-facing resource with information to support design and implementation of Food is Medicine interventions for older individuals

1. Indian Health Service [IHS]. Produce Prescription Pilot Program (P4). IHS Website. 2024. <https://www.ihs.gov/nutrition/produce-prescription-programs/> 2. National Institutes of Health [NIH]. Notice of Special Interest (NOSI): Stimulating Research to Understand and Address Hunger, Food and Nutrition Insecurity. NIH Website. 2022. <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-22-135.html>. 3. Administration for Community Living [ACL]. Nutrition Services. ACL Website. 2024. <https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/nutrition-services>.

Food is Medicine as Value-Based Care

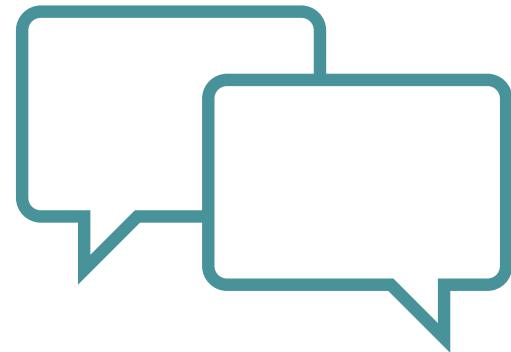
- **Healthcare systems** are ideal connection points for Food is Medicine strategies
- The outcome should be **improved health**, with decreased healthcare spending as an ancillary effect
 - Food is Medicine interventions result in **better disease management** and **fewer hospital admissions**—better patient health and reduced cost
- Identify at-need patient and connect them with community and healthcare resources
- Sustainable funding is key
 - Make use of covered benefits when possible
 - Use grant programs and local community organizations to fill in the gaps

Everyone Can Contribute to the Success of Food is Medicine Programs



NP/PA = nurse practitioner/physician associate; PCP = primary care practitioner

Faculty Discussion



SMART Goals

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely

Put information into action! Consider the following goals; then *set a time frame* that fits with your work environment and *a reasonable improvement target* that aligns with your patient population.

- Recognize patients in your clinical practice who are experiencing food insecurity
- Increase the number of patients with chronic diet-related disorders with whom you discuss the benefits of nutritional intervention
- Partner with other members of the health care team to adopt a Food is Medicine approach to health care
- Connect patients with community resources to and government programs to support Food is Medicine interventions



Other programs in this series include:

**Nourishing
Communities Part 2:
*Tackling Health Disparities
Through Accessible Food
Resources***

**Nourishing
Communities Part 3:
*Screening and Intervention to
Improve Nutrition Equity in
Underserved Communities***



Visit the
Diversity & Inclusion Hub

Free resources and education on improving health equity
for health care professionals and patients

<https://www.cmeoutfitters.com/practice/diversity-and-inclusion-hub/>

To Receive Credit

To receive CME/CE credit for this activity, participants must complete the post-test and evaluation online.

Participants will be able to download and print their certificate immediately upon completion.