Healthy Food Distribution at Information Outposts: A Patient Engagement Strategy

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Project Goals
- To create an integrated population health model of community partnership that addresses social & health needs.
- To use “food” as an innovative strategy to engage “food insecure” patrons in Health Programming.
- To address “What Matters” most to the people we work with and meet our patients where they are at.

Background
Communities and individuals with greater social needs have higher healthcare costs, higher disease prevalence, and worse health outcomes.

MHVC funded an innovation pilot project at the Yonkers Public Library that integrated a case manager to link patrons to SDH resources and primary care. With the goal of identifying health gaps, patrons were surveyed regarding SDH stressors and health needs. Based on survey analysis, targeted health programming is being implemented at the library.

Analysis of social needs revealed that 25% of survey respondents had been unable to get adequate food when needed over the past year. The table below highlights the association between social needs and food access. The odds of experiencing stress* related to social needs were higher among those with inadequate access to food. For example, those with inadequate access to food were:
- 9.6 times as likely to have stress related to transportation
- 6.1 times as likely to have stress related to their housing/living situation
- 2.2 times as likely to have stress related to getting proper medical care

Odds of stress related to social needs by access to food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Needs</th>
<th>Adequate access</th>
<th>Inadequate access</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>9.60</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using public services</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>6.84</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and violence</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>&lt;0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money or finances</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious illness or death of a close family member</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood environment</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job situation</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance use or drugs</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<td>Immigration</td>
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<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experiences of racism/discrimination</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with police</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage or romantic relationships</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raising children/being a parent/problems with children</td>
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<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting proper medical care</td>
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<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
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<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Stress defined by “extreme stress” or “lot of stress”

Methods

Contract with Feeding Westchester
- Hunger mapping of Yonkers Census tracts with high food insecurity
- Identification of Impact Sites based on the following criteria:
  ✓ located in target census track
  ✓ Significant community reach
  ✓ Adequate space for health programming and navigation deployment
- Integration of food distribution within Impact Sites

Yonkers Public Library Pilot Program
- Administer survey to library patrons
- Analyze data trends
- Identify association of food insecurity and lack of other social needs
- Implement case management and health programming at YPL

Program Design and Evaluation
- Design Patient Reported Outcomes (PRO) survey
- Collect PROs at Impact Sites during food distributions
- Analyze survey data
- Deploy targeted programs to meet needs identified on survey
- Embed care navigation at Impact Sites, with linkage to health services & social service organizations

Conceptual Model
1. Patients visit clinic service provider
2. Patients screened for SDH
3. If social needs identified, patients connected to CBO via CHW/navigator
4. Individuals come to food pantry
5. Served for social as well as medical needs
6. If medical or social needs identified, they are linked to care via CHW/navigator

Discussion/Future Directions

The creation of “Information Outposts” at local CBOs is a promising strategy to address social needs and provide linkage to medical services for high risk community members. Given the significant overlap of food insecurity with other social needs in this community, designing integrated programs at food pantries allows for initial engagement around a patron’s priority social need (i.e., food), while also addressing comorbid medical and additional SDH. We hypothesize that the creation of targeted health programming and case management in this context will meet patients where they are at, both literally and figuratively, by addressing what matters most to them at a particular point in time.

Hunger Mapping conducted by Feeding Westchester found that 8 census tracts in Yonkers, NY accounted for 20% (1.80 million food pounds) of Westchester county’s total annual “meal gap.” The prevalence of food insecurity in these tracts was 19% (n=44,805).