

FOOD SECURITY IMPROVES HEALTH OUTCOMES

Massachusetts has long understood the connection between hunger and health. Now we are proving that increased food security can improve health outcomes. Project Bread has provided nutrition intervention case management to over 4,000 patients from 35 health centers, hospitals and primary care offices across the Commonwealth. Three Accountable Care Organizations refer eligible patients to Project Bread as part of MassHealth's Flexible Services Program pilot under the 1115 MassHealth Demonstration waiver.

AFTER PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM:

✘ **25.3% decrease**
in reported food insecurity

✘ **99% of patients**
reported improved health

✘ **88% of clients**
felt confident in their nutrition knowledge
after 6 months

✘ **12.4% increase**
in SNAP utilization

✘ **3.5 additional servings**
of fruits and vegetables for clients per week

“ I was told after my surgery I needed a lot of calcium and protein to recover, but I’m lactose intolerant. Project Bread gave me nutrition counseling related to non-dairy based calcium sources and grocery gift cards. I now have what I need, and I’ve been eating a lot more fruits and vegetables.”

The data included in this brief is based on Community Care Cooperative patients only. Flexible Services is a pilot program and not all eligible members may receive services.



It's about more than food →

One-on-one case management connects people with a wide range of goods and services for health improvements that continue beyond the program.

Project Bread provides culturally aware support in **185 languages**.

- Grocery store gift cards
- Transportation assistance
- Kitchen supplies and appliances
- Cooking classes
- Nutrition counseling
- Assistance accessing SNAP, School meals, & WIC
- Information and referrals to local food pantries
- Referrals for medically tailored meals

Recommendations for the Rules Committee

✘ All Medicaid/Medicare nutrition support programs should integrate the provision of “more than just food” into their work, including:

- Wrap around case management support, connecting patients to federal nutrition and local community food programs; coordinating nutrition counseling services and kitchen equipment deliveries; and partnering with the patient’s clinician.
- Kitchen Equipment—82% of patients needed basic kitchen equipment such as plates, cups, utensils, toasters, and in some cases, a refrigerator.
- Nutrition counseling, including cooking classes.
- Transportation to grocery stores and food programs.

✘ More states should make use of the federal waivers made available by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to offer Flexible Services Nutrition Programs.

✘ Flexible Services Nutrition Programs should be intentional about hiring staff that reflect the communities they serve to find success. Project Bread’s case managers are bi-lingual and speak the four languages that are most commonly spoken by patients.

PROJECT BREAD IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH ACCOUNTABLE CARE ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING:

- ✘ Community Care Cooperative
- ✘ Boston Medical Center
- ✘ Boston Children’s Hospital

Food security case management provided by Project Bread is a part of MassHealth’s statewide Flexible Services Pilot provided to patients by referral only.

