

The Good Food Rx

An ARHP initiative for seniors experiencing food insecurity

THE FACTS

FOOD DESERTS

Individuals have **limited access to affordable or quality food** due to lack of transportation and/or local grocery stores. 14% have limited access to healthy foods in the ARHP service area.¹

FOOD INSECURITY

Nearly 1 in 4 Arkansans do not have access to sufficient food or quality food to meet their basic needs.²

HIGH POVERTY

More than 1 in 5 residents in the ARHP service area live in poverty.³ **29% of children** in the region live in poverty.¹

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Over 40% of the ARHP service area population are children (under 18) and seniors (65 and over).⁴

CHRONIC DISEASE

Adult obesity (41%) and diabetes (13%) rates are high in the region.¹



What if you could prescribe food as medicine?

In 2022, stories of isolated seniors with little to no access to transportation or healthy food began to reach the ears of Arkansas Rural Health Partnership senior leadership. By January 2023, the organization launched a two-year pilot project (funded by the USDA Delta Healthcare Services Grant) to test the innovative concept that food choices impact health outcomes.

The Model. Two primary care practices in southeast Arkansas (Lake Village Clinic & UAMS East-Helena) were selected to serve as the preliminary pilot sites. Chronic care management teams conducted social determinant of health screenings with existing patients and then referred a total of

120 eligible individuals to the pilot program (seniors age 65+ with chronic disease experiencing food insecurity). Participants are provided with healthy food (groceries or prepared meals depending on site), nutritious recipes & cooking classes (remote). Local nursing students offer participants one-on-one patient education, coaching, and connection to resources.

Remote patient monitoring devices capture relevant health informatics, which is utilized by the primary care team (including the chronic care case managers) to improve service delivery and related health outcomes. Virtual exercise classes will be added to increase mobility and social connectedness among pilot participants.

ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY IN RURAL ARKANSAS



UAMS East

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences East Regional Center (located in Helena, AR) offers The Good Food Rx market and educational session on the second Tuesday of every month.

To date, The Good Food Rx Helena site has provided over 1,700 pounds of fresh food to 24 selected participants. Individuals receive food through monthly distribution and are provided education about food dollar stretches, healthy cooking and eating, nutrition for specific medical conditions, and healthy recipes.

The UAMS East site is partnering with Well Fed to provide the food, set up the market, and provide information to participants.

ARHP Lake Village

The Good Food Rx is located at the ARHP Headquarters in Lake Village, AR. Each week, ARHP staff prepare healthy meals in a new commercial-grade teaching kitchen. Staff then deliver the meals to seniors, many of which are homebound and isolated.

In the first five months of the pilot, the ARHP Lake Village site enrolled 60 participants in the program and delivered over 1,000 healthy meals. Chronic care managers at Lake Village Clinic collect relevant health metrics (including hemoglobin A1c, body mass index, and blood pressure) monthly to demonstrate health improvement.

Current Partners

The Good Food Rx pilot is made possible through a USDA grant and the engagement of the following generous partners: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (Institute for Digital Health, College of Nursing, Center on Aging), Well Fed, and Lake Village Medical Clinic.



Looking Ahead

With expanded funding, ARHP will look to grow the number of The Good Food Rx locations across south Arkansas. A new site is expected to open in Pine Bluff, AR, over the next year.

“Ultimately, we envision every ARHP hospital and FQHC member becoming the home of a local Good Food Rx site where services are reimbursed. Each site will have the ability to meet the unique food insecurity needs of local residents and may be reflected in varying target populations (i.e. children, single-parent households, etc.). We are thrilled to support communities to meet the whole health needs of their residents.”

Mellie Boagni f. Bridewell, ARHP President & CEO