

DASH PROJECT PROFILE

Food for Health: Coordinating Care Across Sectors to Improve Health Among Vulnerable Populations

Dallas, TX



“Our project is creating a unique opportunity for patients with chronic disease to improve their self-management by working to remove structural barriers to improved health outcomes.”

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Target Population	Homeless and housed patients in Dallas who experience food insecurity and have been diagnosed with hypertension and/or diabetes
Health Objective	Improve the dietary intake and nutritional status of patients; enhance care coordination between health care and social services providers
Geographic Scale	County
Sectors	Clinical health care, food/nutrition, social/human services, housing/homelessness
Data Types	Service (EHRs, case management), community-generated, administrative
Data Integration	Create a network of health care and social services providers with a common electronic platform
Project Expertise	Community engagement; real-time predictive and surveillance analytics for healthcare

OVERVIEW

The Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation, the Parkland Health and Hospital System, and the North Texas Food Bank and its partner agencies are leveraging the Dallas Information Exchange Portal to improve the diet and nutrition of patients who experience food insecurity and have been diagnosed with chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes. The project will improve multi-sector care coordination by providing hunger relief agencies with a real-time, electronic one-page summary of clients’ medical and social history so that case workers can recommend appropriate nutritional choices and facilitate chronic disease self-management. Relevant information will also be shared with health care providers at Parkland to enhance their understanding of patients’ needs.

PROJECT APPROACH

The Food for Health project will:

- **Create electronic continuity of care documents:** Utilizing a cloud-based electronic health record system, food bank case managers will receive a one page summary of clients’ dietary needs, upcoming doctor appointments, and current medications to help guide food choices based on health conditions and provide prescription and appointment reminders.
- **Use data for program evaluation/improvement:** Aggregate data from the Information Exchange Portal as well as qualitative data collected through focus groups and key informant interviews will be used to inform project implementation.

LEAD AGENCY

Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation (PCCI) is an advanced non-profit research center on a mission to reimagine and expand the knowledge-base of health care delivery in the age of machines. PCCI uses scientific research and applied analytics to improve the quality, efficiency, and experience of health care. Their role in this project is to deliver training to community partners, provide the technology platform, and conduct ongoing program assessment and evaluation.

PARTNERS/COLLABORATORS

Parkland Health and Hospital System (PHHS) is one of the largest public hospital systems in the country, with an average of over one million patient visits annually. Their role in this project is to enroll program participants and coordinate their care with the North Texas Food Bank using PCCI's technology.

North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) is a Dallas nonprofit hunger relief organization that distributes donated, purchased, and prepared foods through a network of more than 250 partner agencies in 13 counties. Their role in this project is to coordinate their care with PHHS using PCCI's technology and engage food bank staff and clients throughout the initiative.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT

Sharing data across a well-coordinated network of hospitals and food banks in Dallas will help improve the health and well-being of populations faced with the dual burden of chronic disease and food insecurity. Using information gathered from community stakeholders as well as available evidence in the literature, the project team is aiming to document the following improvements in project participants at the end of the grant:

- 20% increase in the number of patients visiting one of the participating food bank partner agencies
- 20% increase in the appointment adherence rate
- 10% reduction in emergency department utilization
- 20% decrease in poor glycemic control (elevated blood sugar levels)
- 5% decrease in the hospitalization rate

USE CASE SUMMARY

USE CASE	ACTOR	SYSTEM	OUTCOME
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Care coordination• Program evaluation and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parkland Health and Hospital System• North Texas Food Bank Case Managers• Partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Real-time electronic continuity of care document (1-page health info summary sheet)• Aggregate data from Information Exchange Portal (IEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Patients experiencing food insecurity referred to participating food bank providers• Food bank case managers make dietary recommendations and reinforce other health messages• Aggregate data is used to improve service delivery and programs

ABOUT DASH

The Parkland Center for Clinical Innovation is a grantee of Data Across Sectors for Health (DASH) – a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, with direction and technical assistance provided by the Illinois Public Health Institute in partnership with the Michigan Public Health Institute. DASH aims to identify barriers, opportunities, promising practices and indicators of progress for multi-sector collaborations to connect information systems and share data for community health improvement. DASH is a partner of All In: Data for Community Health, a national network of projects with the common goal of improving multi-sector data sharing and collaboration.