

Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

FOOD FOR HEALTH: INPATIENT, OUTPATIENT, MOBILE AND FESTIVE

Homeless, working poor, HIV infected, mentally ill, elderly, chronically ill, school-based, immigrant: Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center (CSH) serves all of these subpopulations and more in inner city New

Haven, Connecticut. The diversity of their patients is matched by the diversity of their food security efforts. CSH brought food to 4400 patients through its multiple programs last year, collectively called Food For Health.

CSH believes food security is central to its mission.

Because it manages two inpatient treatment facilities, it has an industrial kitchen and a chef. That has helped CSH spread food interventions throughout the organization.

The center has a number of wellness food initiatives where patients learn nutrition and food preparation. Cooking Matters is one course used. Many of the patients have not been previously taught how to prepare fresh food and lack food preparation tools. CSH also enrolls patients in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as part of eligibility assistance.

Healthy Snacks for Children started when behavioral therapists realized children were hungry after school. They needed to eat before they could focus on the

appointment. At first, therapists supplied the food. Now the program is funded by grants and donations.

Child and family guidance centers have a snack closet, which every child visits when they arrive. Staff believes it builds retention and enables visits to be more effective.

The Grow Truck is an intervention aimed at preschoolers and their families. The center partners with the Connecticut Food Bank and the University of Connecticut to bring this supermarket on wheels to the center January through May. Parents are allowed to select fresh fruit, vegetables and meat. They are given education on food, budgeting and reading to their children as part of the intervention.

CSH started the Summer Supper Meal Truck and the Connecticut Mobile Food Pantry collaborative in partnership with public schools and United Way. Each summer weekday, the truck delivers hot meals to children between 4:30 and 5:00 pm. Staff report the children come running when they see the truck. The mobile pantry accompanies the truck four times during the summer, giving parents the chance to select groceries while their children get supper.

CSH looks forward to evaluating the health impact of these programs. Last year they offered services to 4428 patients, 1444 SNAP enrollees, 2984 summer meals, and 50 holiday baskets. They estimate 279 employee hours per year on their food initiatives.

From preschool to old age, inpatient rehab to outpatient assistance, Cornell Scott-Hill Health Center addresses food scarcity in an integrated fashion as part of its mission. With a host of community partners, it is transforming community health.



INTERVENTIONS

KITCHEN-BASED CLASSES IN
FOOD PREPARATION, SAFETY
AND NUTRITION

A HEALTHY SNACKS PROGRAM
FOR CHILDREN AND
A SNACK CLOSET

A MOBILE FOOD PANTRY IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH A LOCAL
UNIVERSITY AND FOOD BANK

A SUMMER MEALS TRUCK IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCAL PUBLIC
SCHOOLS AND THE UNITED WAY

A HOLIDAY FOOD-BASKET PROGRAM

RECOGNIZING FOOD CHALLENGES DURING HOLIDAYS

For many families living paycheck to paycheck, the end of the month is marked by scarcity. So it is especially difficult that our biggest holidays are also at month's end. Thanksgiving, Christmas and Kwanzaa are tough for Cornell Scott-Hill families to navigate. Food resources are often stretched in favor of a little gift or travel money.

For several years, the center sponsored an employee and community food drive, donating all collections to a local charity. Last year, they

decided to focus on patient families and put together 50 large baskets of food. Each basket supplied a full holiday feast.

Families are nominated by staff at the 20 sites. Volunteers deliver the baskets to patient homes. The response has been overwhelming. The personal aspect of care from center to patient family has kept it from feeling like a handout—instead it is received as an embrace. Next year's goal is to serve 100 families with baskets.

PARTNERS

CITY SEED MOBILE MARKET

CONNECTICUT FOOD BANK

COOKING MATTERS

FAITH COMMUNITIES

NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

STATE OF CONNECTICUT SOCIAL SERVICES

SUMMER SUPPER MEAL TRUCK

UNITED WAY

WALMART FOUNDATION