Community Food Access:
Reducing Food Insecurity and Obesity through the Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative

Part 1: Montgomery County Food Council – Best Practices Implementing the Food Security Plan
About Your Hosts:

Webinar Moderator:

Evelyn Kelly, Senior Program Manager, Institute for Public Health Innovation

About Institute for Public Health Innovation: IPHI Launched in 2009 to Serve MD, VA and DC. IPHI builds partnerships across sectors and cultivates innovative solutions to improve health and well-being for all people and communities throughout MD, VA and DC, particularly those most affected by health inequities.
Housekeeping

• Today’s webinar is scheduled to last 1 hours including Q&A
• Slides and a recording of the webinar will be available online – attendees will receive a link to these resources following the webinar
• All participants are muted
• Questions can be submitted via the Zoom “Q&A” or “Chat” screen at any time
• Questions will be addressed during the Q&A session at the end of the webinar
About Healthy Montgomery

• Healthy Montgomery is the official community health improvement planning process for Montgomery County, MD.

• Since 2010, IPHI has worked closely with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

• Funded by the four Montgomery County hospital systems: Adventist Healthcare, Medstar Montgomery, Holy Cross Health, and Suburban.

• Learn more about our work through our website: www.healthymontgomery.org.
About The Transforming Communities Initiative (TCI)

• In 2016, Montgomery County, MD was selected as a site for TCI funding by Trinity Health.

• The Healthy Montgomery TCI is a collaborative partnership, comprised of Holy Cross Health, the Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI), Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Eat Well Be Active Partnership, and numerous other government and community partners and is funded by Trinity Health.

• TCI funding supports a range of policy, system, and environmental change strategies to reduce obesity, promote tobacco-free living, and improve community health.

• TCI funding supports the implementation of the Healthy Montgomery Community Health Improvement Plan. The EWBA coalition serves as the primary collaborative working structure for TCI efforts.
TCI Strategy Areas

• Community Food Access
  • Partners: Montgomery County Food Council, Primary Care Coalition, Manna Food, CHEER, Mobile Medical Cares, Montgomery County HHS, CountyStat

• School Health and Wellness
  • Partners: Montgomery County Public Schools, Alliance for a Healthier Generation, MF State Dep. of Ed.

• Promoting Tobacco-Free Living (Tobacco 21)
  • Partners: The American Lung Association, The American Cancer Society, Tobacco Free Kids, and the American Heart Association
TCI Strategy Areas Continued

• Promoting and Implementing Safe Routes to School
  • Partners: Montgomery County Dep. of Transportation, Montgomery County Public Schools

• Implementing Nutrition Standards in Early Childhood Settings
  • Partners: School Readiness Consulting
HEALTHY MONTGOMERY WEBINAR SERIES

Community Food Access: Reducing Food Insecurity and Obesity through the Healthy Montgomery Transforming Communities Initiative

Part 1: October 4th | Part 2: October 16th
2-3 PM EST

Part 1:
Montgomery County Food Council – Best Practices Implementing the Food Security Plan

Part 2:
Food Is Medicine – Reducing Barriers to Accessing Healthy Food in Vulnerable Communities
Best Practices Implementing the Montgomery County Food Security Plan

October 4th, 2018
Mark Hodge  
Montgomery County DHHS  
Vice-Chair, Steering Committee; Policy Committee

Mark is the Assistant Chief Operating Officer in the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. He has worked in various roles in MCDHHS for the past 17 + years including School Health, Immunizations, Refugee Health, TB and Deputy Health Officer before recently taking on this new role. He has been a member of the Montgomery County Food Council for nearly 4 years, was a key contributor to the Food Security Plan and oversees the implementation of the Plan for MCDHHS. Mark has a B.S. in Sociology from Texas A&M University, a B.S. in Nursing from the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and a M.S. in Healthcare Administration from the University of Maryland, University College.
The Food Security Strategic Plan

- Bill 19-16 passed in July 2016 requiring delivery of Food Security Plan by December 2016

- Plan development - Fall 2016

- Plan released by the County Executive in January 2017
Shared Vision

Our community is a place where all people at all times have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious food in order to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to making Montgomery County, MD a place where all live in dignity.
Structure of the Plan

- Background and Demographics
- Findings
- Recommendations
Food Insecurity In Montgomery County

Need: Food Insecurity Rate

This map displays the food insecurity rate for each census tract in the Capital Area Food Bank's service area. Food insecurity is measured by the U.S. Census Bureau annually. County and subcounty estimates are also calculated annually, using data from the Map the Meal Gap study conducted by Feeding America, the national umbrella organization of food banks.

Findings

**Children**

Children were found to have insufficient food during summer and on weekends, and had a higher food insecurity risk if they were living in single parent households and were children of color. Childhood food insecurity can, among other things, result in long-term poor health consequences, behavioral and social difficulties and poor school performance.

**Seniors**

6.6% seniors in Montgomery county are estimated to live below the poverty level, and around 20-30,000 live below the self sufficiency standard. Many are also aging in place and in isolation, with limited access to transportation and technology, limited English proficiency, physical and mental disabilities and medical dietary restrictions.

**People with Disabilities**

Families with a disabled member were estimated to be 2 to 3 times more likely to be food insecure. Working aged adults with disabilities are twice as likely to live below the poverty level as adults without disabilities. Barriers to food security include lack of case management, limited communication ability, restricted mobility, and access to transportation to purchase and/or prepare food.

**Foreign Born**

50-60,000 foreign born residents were living at or below 150% of the poverty level in 2016. Food insecurity in this population results from factors such as language and cultural barriers, a lack of culturally appropriate food, and fear of asking for help, especially in mixed documentation status families.

**Other Risk Factors**

- living below the self-sufficiency standard
- having limited access to transportation
- being eligible but not enrolled in benefits
- being homeless
- having faith based dietary restrictions
- working two or more jobs.
Thomas Tippett
Performance Analyst, Office of the County Executive, Montgomery County CountyStat

Thomas Tippett is a Performance Management and Data Analyst within the Offices of the County Executive of Montgomery County Maryland. He has been a member of the County’s Performance team for three years and has focused on supporting community development, housing programs, and the County Executive’s Food Security Strategy. Thomas has a background in Enterprise Resource Planning and Information Systems.
A Food Secure Montgomery

What we know now and what we can do

Montgomery County's vision of food security is a community in which all people at all times have access to safe, healthy, and nutritious food, with dignity. Food security encompasses a range of overlapping factors, including income, education, and a variety of social and economic determinants. The CountyStat platform provides a comprehensive view of the food security landscape in Montgomery County, enabling stakeholders to track progress and take action towards a more secure future.
Drivers of Food Insecurity

Accessibility

A principal driver of food insecurity and other health deficiencies is the inability of residents to reach healthful food outlets. There is a high correlation between access to grocery stores and healthy diets and residents without reliable transportation may be limited to convenience stores with finite stocks of nutritious foods.

The map shows the percent of households within the County’s census tracts that have no access to a vehicle as well as the location of major grocery stores and markets.

Other Barriers to Access

Language

FoodStat can be found online at: bit.ly/mcfoodstat
Building Momentum and a Coalition

“A catalyst for communication, collaboration, and data sharing as we go forward with the implementation of this strategy”
Jenna Umbriac
Director of Programs and Policy, Manna Food Center
Council Member, Montgomery County Food Council
Co-Chair, Montgomery County Food Council Food Recovery and Access Working Group

Jenna Umbriac is a registered dietitian and Director of Programs and Policies at Manna Food Center in Gaithersburg, MD. At Manna, Jenna directs the weekend food assistance program, Smart Sacks, community food education, and designs policies to ensure Manna is providing a safe and healthful food supplement. She works to provide regionally produced and nutritious food to Manna's participants through donor education and partnerships with local farms and farm markets. In addition to her work at Manna, Jenna serves on the Montgomery County Food Council and co-chairs the Council’s Food Recovery and Access working group. Jenna has a M.S. in nutrition from Bastyr University and a B.S. in biology from Loyola University Maryland.
Food Recovery and Access Working Group (FRAWG)

**Mission statement:**
The Food Recovery and Access working group supports the increased recovery of, equitable access to and advocacy for more healthful food for Montgomery County residents. We do this by working with the Food Council leadership to **build capacity of food assistance organizations**, **amplify the work of Community Food Rescue**, and **integrate local and regional efforts** into the work of community, non-profit, business and government stakeholders.

**Active Subgroup Foci** - Advancing Screen & Intervene, Nutrition Standards for Food Assistance, Increasing Culturally Appropriate Food Access

**Value** - facilitating connectivity, best practice and resource sharing, creating trainings, multi-sector approach to Food Security Plan recommendations
The Montgomery County Food Council’s Training, Connectivity and Resources Survey (TCR) was created in 2017 to collect information from food assistance providers on their training needs, potential for increasing capacity (or barriers to doing so), the availability and sources of culturally appropriate foods, and the usefulness and format of a provider-to-provider connectivity and information sharing platform. FRAWG members create and/or provide access to regular trainings on areas identified in the survey.

### TCR Survey Conclusions

- **Trainings currently offered:**
  - Food safety and handling trainings, and nutritional content/education trainings.
  - Trainings needed: data collection, volunteer management, advocacy/outreach and customer service.

- **Preferred format for future trainings:**
  - "Train-the-trainer" or self-paced, and at a minimum, on a monthly basis.

- **Greatest number of provider clients:**
  - Hispanic/Latino from El Salvador, followed by Africans from Ethiopia.

- **Culturally appropriate foods needed:**
  - Large bags of white rice, cooking oil, masa, beans, milk and fresh vegetables.

- **Biggest challenges for food assistance providers:**
  - Data collection, limitation of space and facilities, language barriers (with clients), consistent staff/volunteer support, reliable availability of food to distribute and donor concerns about liability.

- **8 out of 25 providers** surveyed felt that they could increase their capacity.

- **Barriers to increasing capacity:**
  - Lack of refrigeration/storage space, lack of physically able/bilingual volunteers, lack of concerted or efficient outreach strategy.

- **Local stakeholders to engage:**
  - DHHS, Office of Community Partnerships, County Regional Services Centers, MCPS, tenant associations, Healthcare providers, minority health groups and behavioral health crisis service centers.
Building Capacity of Food Assistance Organizations

Food Assistance Provider Toolkit

- SNAP Outreach Support
- Culturally Appropriate Food Access Report
- Food Safety for Donors and Recipients
- Screen & Intervene for Older Adults Training Materials
- Capital Area Food Bank Network Database

R5.2 Develop “best practices” guides and connect orgs with training and mentoring re: recruiting volunteers, advocacy, and fundraising

R8.3 Innovative Resource Sharing

R11.2 Increase Outreach Network and Capacity to Maximize Participation in Benefit Programs
Amplifying the Work of Community Food Rescue

- R5.4 Support and expand food recovery
- R7.3 Enhance Farmers Markets and Farmer Participation
- R12.2 Increase availability of locally produced fruits, vegetables, and meats
FRAWG Subgroup on “Screen & Intervene”

R7.1 Better Connect Health Care Community to Food Security
R7.4 Engage All Businesses
Amanda Nesher  
**Food Security Programs Manager, Montgomery County Food Council**

Amanda manages and coordinates the implementation of the Food Council’s Food Security Plan initiatives, which aim to build a Montgomery County in which all people have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food, with dignity. Amanda brings considerable experience in both the public and private sectors. Most recently, she worked as the Legislative Associate for anti-hunger nonprofit MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, where she advocated to protect and strengthen the federal nutrition safety net, with particular emphasis on the food security needs for veterans and military families. She previously worked as a corporate attorney at the offices of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton LLP before relocating to Israel, where she worked as a Legal and Strategic Advisor for the Office of the Prime Minister. Amanda has an LL.M. from Columbia Law School in New York and a B.A. in Law from Cambridge University in England.
Food Assistance Resource Directory
Standardized Data Collecting and Reporting

• Montgomery County Food Council’s Data Standardization Survey

• Survey Goal

• Current Status
Children Under 5

- MCFC has engaged with the DHHS and the Community Action Agency to discuss building food insecurity screenings and referrals into all CAA partner programs and initiatives.

- MCFC is partnering with DHHS, CAA and other partners to identify the appropriate organizations, groups and individuals to participate in a series of listening sessions on food insecurity in the Children under 5 population, which will occur in the Fall of 2018 at three locations in the County.

- The listening sessions (in English, Spanish and Amharic) will focus on assessing the magnitude of the issue, the demographics and locations in which it is concentrated, and the barriers to food access that families of such children face.

In 2017, Dr. Yu-Wei Wang, Research Director from the University of Maryland Counseling Center, conducted a food insecurity survey of UMD students.

Over 22,000 emails sent out to graduate and undergraduate students

3,791 undergraduates and 1,110 graduate students completed the survey

41% some form of food insecurity, 21% marginal and 20% severe.

Predictors: race, family economic stability

Barriers to Food Access:

- Ineligibility for federal benefits and financial burden on student families
- High tuition rates, accommodation costs, childcare costs and transportation costs
- Limited employment opportunities and lack of facilities to prepare nutritious food

Solutions:

- Expanded capacity and efficiency of onsite food pantries, clothes libraries and hygiene product distribution services
- Food assistance information in course syllabus, online textbooks, “community day” benefits sign-up.
Recommendations: Years Two-Three

- Strengthen Food Assistance Infrastructure
- Strategically build capacity of smaller organizations & establish new programs
- Health in all Policies for Food Assistance (Establish nutrition goals and standards for food assistance)
- Support and expand food recovery
- Engage Community Partners and the Private Sector
- Enhanced Communication strategies
- Increase retail food access and expand food production
- Adjust and increase transportation resources
- Maximize participation in benefit programs

Status:
- Pending
- Initial Stage
- Active
- Complete
Considerations: Years Four-Five

- Expand Food Literacy Capacity
- Food Preservation
- Nutrition and Culinary Skills Education
- Increased Garden Capacity
- Disaster/Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Workforce and Economic Development
Questions?

• Please type your questions into the Q&A panel at the bottom of your screen and we’ll direct your questions to the panelists.

These Food Council Initiatives are made possible by support from the Institute for Public Health Innovation through the Trinity Health Transforming Communities Initiative, Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States, the Mead Family Foundation, the Healthcare Initiative Foundation, the Montgomery County Council and the Office of the County Executive, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Whole Foods Market, and additional community supporters.
Contact Information

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For more information on the Transforming Communities Initiative, please visit: www.institutephi.org/HealthyMontgomeryTCI

For More information on Healthy Montgomery, please visit: www.HealthyMontgomery.org

For more information on the Montgomery County Food Council, please visit: www.MocoFoodCouncil.org

Facebook/Twitter: @InstitutePHI
Thanks and See You Soon!

Part 2:
Food Is Medicine – Reducing Barriers to Accessing Healthy Food in Vulnerable Communities

October, 16, 2018 | 2-3 PM EST
Register at: https://bit.ly/2MZz04k