

# Emerging SDOH Practices

CASE STUDY I

## Exploring the Feasibility and Usefulness of a Nutrition Guide for Patients Experiencing Homelessness

CINCINNATI, OHIO

Dan Hargraves, MSW

This was a project of the residency program at The Christ Hospital/University of Cincinnati Family Medicine Program and the University of Cincinnati Department of Family & Community Medicine Research Division.

- ### 1 Why did you start?

  - Proper nutrition is important to overall health
  - Low-income populations often consume more processed, low-nutrient foods
  - To support homeless patients to make healthy nutritional decisions by creating patient-informed nutrition guides
- ### 2 What did you do?

  - Patients were surveyed to assess nutrition knowledge and needs
  - Created a culturally appropriate basic nutrition knowledge and resource pamphlet and supplemental one page handouts: healthy low-cost recipes, how to obtain food assistance, making healthier choices on-the-go, and “Eat This, Not That”
  - A patient focus group reviewed the materials and additional changes were made
  - Patients were interviewed about their familiarity with and usefulness of the materials, staff and providers were surveyed about their experience with and assessment of the materials
- ### 3 What did you find?

  - 22 patients completed follow-up interviews, mean age 49, 68% men
  - 27% were familiar with the materials prior to the interview, the others were seeing the materials for the first time during the interview
  - 82% rated the materials as useful or very useful, with “Eat This, Not That” being ranked the most useful (41% of respondents)
  - 12 providers completed a follow-up interview, mean age 37 years, 83% women; 92% had seen the pamphlet and 80% said they had used it with a patient during a routine encounter
  - Materials were used most frequently for patients with diabetes and hypertension, particularly for those with limited cooking ability
- ### 4 What does it mean?

  - Homelessness creates additional barriers to consuming healthy food
  - With the support of clinic staff, patients are using the nutritional booklet and supplemental pages to make healthier food decisions with the resources available to them
  - Most patients felt the “Eat This, Not That” section was most helpful
  - Providers and staff found the information useful as a point of care tool