

Supporting MSK Food Insecure Patients by Locating Reliable Resources Available in their Communities

Reliable Community Food Resources

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Background

- ❖ Food insecurity (FI) is a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food and it is associated with chronic disease, and delays in treatment (1-3).
- ❖ At MSK FI patients have the advantage of the MSK FOOD Pantry, run by MSK's Immigrant Health and Cancer Disparities, which provides free healthy groceries for patients in active treatment.
- ❖ Currently the MSK FOOD pantry has locations Commack, Ralph Lauren Center, Koch, Brooklyn Infusion Center, 53rd Street Outpatient Pavilion, and Nassau.
- ❖ However, some MSK FI patients do not have easy access to one of the MSK FOOD pantry locations because they don't live close to one of the pantries.
- ❖ In addition, lists of community pantries available online are not always reliable. Only 50% of pantries in Bronx, NY were found to be open during hours listed online with several found to have prolonged or indefinite closures. (4)

References

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- (2) Seligman, H.K., et al. Food Insecurity Is Associated with Chronic Disease among Low-Income NHANES Participants. *J Nutr.* 2010; Feb; 140(2): 304–310
- (3) Gany, F, et al. Food to overcome outcomes disparities. A randomized controlled trial of food insecurity interventions. *J Clin Oncol.* 2022;40(31):3603-3612
- (4) Ginsburg ZA, Bryan AD, Rubinstein EB, Frankel HJ, Maroko AR, Schechter CB, Cooksey Stowers K, Lucan SC. Unreliable and Difficult-to-Access Food for Those in Need: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study of Urban Food Pantries. *J Community Health.* 2019 Feb;44(1):16-31.



Purpose

To create a reliable database of community resources to be utilized by the outpatient dietician when a FI patient is identified but unable to access MSK resources.

Goal

To create a list from 3/1/2023-12/31/2023 with at least 5 confirmed open food pantries within each of the following communities: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island, Westchester, and New Jersey.

Methods

The team contacted pantries, soup kitchens, and mobile produce markets found online within the communities of Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, Long Island, Westchester, and New Jersey to determine:

- 1) Name of Resource
- 2) Type of Resource (Pantry, Soup Kitchen, Other)
- 3) Address and Location information
- 4) Days and Hours
- 5) What the Resource Provides
- 6) Any requirements for the resource (age, resident, or other)
- 7) Need to bring anything (proof of residence, ID, or other)
- 8) Name of Pantry contact person (name of the person you spoke to or emailed)
- 9) Pantry Contact information (phone and/or email)
- 10) Date of contact

Total Number of Community Resources Confirmed and within the Community the Total Number with Different Zip Codes



Results

The team found 131 community resources including pantries, soup kitchens and others that were confirmed to be open, the specific hours and days, what they provided and any requirements for their service, with contact from a representative or volunteer from the resource. Efforts were made to find resources located at different zip codes, so patients could be referred to locations convenient to them.

Conclusions

- ❖ The results exceeded our goal of confirming 5 community resources from each of the areas in that most of our MSK patients live. We can now use this list of resources to search for convenient places by zip code for FI patients that we know are open, their hours/days, what they provide and what the patient needs to bring.
- ❖ For those patients able to access our MSK FOOD pantry, these community resources can provide additional support if desired, and for those who are unable to utilize our MSK FOOD pantry these resources can be a good source of food to support them.
- ❖ During the project, the team found that online resources were not always reliable and that some listed were closed, were no longer providing the service, or changed the days/hours of the service. In many cases, multiple attempts were needed to contact representatives from the online resources listed to confirm the information. This experience helped the team realize some of the barriers that food insecure patients come across to try and access food.
- ❖ For next steps, we plan to continue to add to the resource list we created and update the information as needed. In addition, we will consider tracking patient referrals to the community food resources and get feedback from them on their satisfaction.

Sustainability Recognition



MSK Core Values Represented

