

**Food Insecurity:  
Patient Impact and Implications for End Stage  
Renal Disease Healthcare Providers**



# Overview



- 1) Social Determinants of Health
- 2) Understanding Food Insecurity
- 3) Food Insecurity's Impact on People with End-Stage Renal Disease
- 4) Macro-Factors of Food Insecurity
- 5) Recommendations for Providers and the Community

# The Social Determinants of Health



# Social Determinants of Health

*“The nonmedical, systemic factors that influence health outcomes”<sup>1</sup>*

- Account for between 30-55% of health outcomes<sup>1</sup>
- Unfair and avoidable differences
  - Inequities in health are socially determined<sup>1</sup>

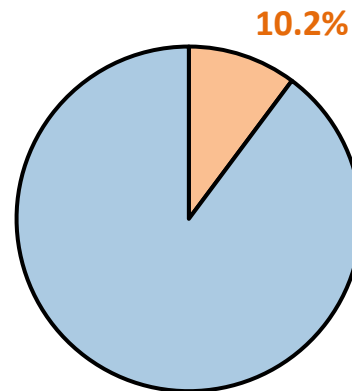


# Defining Food Insecurity



# Understanding Food Insecurity

- **Definition of Food Insecurity:**  
Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways<sup>2</sup>
- **According to the USDA**
  - 13.5 million households (10.2%) in 2021 were food insecure<sup>5</sup>



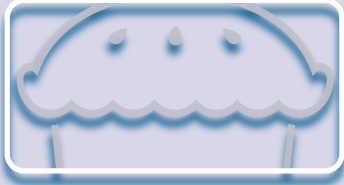
## How Food Insecurity is Measured

- High Food Security
- Marginal Food Security
- Low Food Security
- Very Low Food Security

# The Impact of Food Insecurity on ESRD Patients

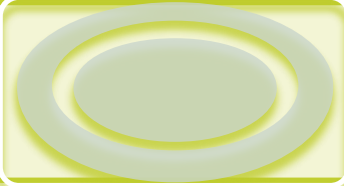


# Food Insecurity Impact on Patients



## Acid Inducing Diets

- Caused by limited fruits and vegetables
- Foods with lots of preservatives are often high in phosphorus and sodium <sup>1</sup>



## Inadequate Nutrition

- Affect fluid status → blood pressure, electrolytes, and overall acid/base balance <sup>1</sup>



## Higher Prevalence of Interactions with Healthcare system

- Unplanned hospitalizations
- Intensive care unit admissions
- Infections <sup>4</sup>



## Forced Choices

- Between gas and food
- Between medication and food
- Between rent and food



## Detrimental Coping Strategies

- In children, food insecurity causes erratic dietary behaviors when food is available (such as bingeing and hoarding)<sup>4</sup>



# Structural Barriers Associated with Food Insecurity



# Structural Barriers

## Environmental Inequities

- Access to grocery stores
  - Lack of access = "food desert"<sup>3</sup>
- Access to fast food
  - Increased access to fast food = "food swamp"<sup>3</sup>
- Prices of food differ depending on the area

# Recommendations for Providers



# Steps Providers Can Take to Address Food Insecurity

## Partner with liaisons who can help patients navigate food insecurity

- Come into appointments armed with names of places and people who are ready to help
  - *Social workers, leaders of nonprofits, local food bank organizers*
- Implement interdisciplinary framework within your practice

## Establish Consistent Screening Practices

- Utilizing measures such as the two-question Hunger Vital Sign to assess food security status
- Assess status prior to offering recommendations for diet changes

## Stay up-to-date about policies and roadblocks affecting food security

- Understand the barriers patients face that are beyond their scope of control



# Recommendations for Dialysis Centers and Transplant Facilities



# Recommendations for Dialysis Facilities and Transplant Centers

## Strategy 1

**Understand and assess how food insecurity affects patients' health**

## Steps To Implement

- 1. Screening:** Include food insecurity assessment questions as part of new patient intake processes.
- 2. Update database of resources:** Establish an interdisciplinary team tasked with maintaining running database of available food assistance programs
- 3. Ongoing staff training:** Orchestrate panel of experts to facilitate provider trainings surrounding food insecurity

# Recommendations for Dialysis Facilities and Transplant Centers

## Strategy 2

## Steps To Implement

1. **Identify Assistance:** Social worker, care coordinator, or community health workers to help patients identify food assistance programs to help reduce cost.

*Example: AKF's need-based financial assistance programs*

2. **Apply for Assistance:** Help patients with applications

### Common Types of Assistance

- **The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** = provides nutrition benefits to supplement food budget
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families** = supports families with children with basic needs
- **Special Supplementation Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** = offers education, referrals, food

**Assist patients  
in obtaining  
food services**

# Recommendations for Dialysis Facilities and Transplant Centers

Strategy 3	Steps To Implement
<b>Address other barriers beyond Food Insecurity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide staff education on the impact structural barriers (including Social Determinants of Health) might play in patients' access to healthcare</li><li>• Include languages beyond English in all patient education materials</li><li>• Provide safe and inclusive space for patients to discuss barriers to care</li></ul>



# Recommendations for Community Action



# Community Recommendations to Combat Food Insecurity



## Know Your Local Food Bank Locations

Discover here: [Find Your Local Food Bank](#)



## Organize a Health Fair

Unsure how? [Health Fair Planning Guide](#)

# Community Recommendations to Combat Food Insecurity



## Orchestrate community gardens

Planning Guide: [How to Start a Community Garden](#)



## Enlist local businesses

Prepared food for distribution modeled: [Home - Food Runners](#)

***“Food is national security. Food is economy. It is employment, energy, history.***

***Food is everything”***

**Chef José Andrés, Founder of World Central Kitchen**



# Food for Thought

What are my misconceptions about food insecurity? Where might those fallacies originate from?

Do I know the locations of my local food banks? Could I tell someone I see asking for food where to go?

What resources do I still need to better equip myself to aid people experiencing food insecurity?



# References

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ESRD NCC welcomes feedback on the guide and suggestions on Social Determinants of Health services which can be highlighted in future editions. Please email us to submit feedback, strategy, or interventions for consideration

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