



School of Medicine

category that includes a “very low” category, signifying multiple disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intakes.

Cooking Matters: Family Medicine Newburg Implements Dare to Care Initiative for At-Risk Patients

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The federal government annually measures household food security, defined as all people in a household having enough food for an

More than one in seven households (18 million or 15 % of the US population) experienced “food insecurity” in 2012. During 2012, 7 million households experienced “very low food security” reporting members who went hungry or skipped meals. While federal food assistance programs targeting low-income households consisting of children, seniors, pregnant or postpartum residents help assuage hunger and poor nutrition for millions of US food-insecure individu-

In Kentucky, the **Feeding America** network consists of 6 food banks serving individuals and families: Dare to Care Food Bank (Jefferson County), Facing Hunger Food bank, Feeding America-Kentucky’s Heartland, Freestone Food bank, God’s Pantry Food Bank Inc. and Tri-State Food Bank. Results from the **Feeding America “Hunger in America 2014 – State Report for Kentucky”** document a total of 19,900 volunteers providing 81,200 hours each week to Kentucky food banks serving 53,400 unique Kentucky clients in a typical week and 547,900 Kentuckians annually. Seventy-seven percent of Kentucky charitable food



active healthy life at all times. These measurements are grouped into four levels of food security from “high” to “very low”. “Low food security” data groupings, defined as “reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet indicating little or no reduced food intake”, are combined in a *food-insecure*

als, an estimated 27% of the 2012 US food-insecure had household incomes above the standard eligibility thresholds for federal nutrition assistance program. Charitable food assistance programs helping to bridge this food gap are organized under **Feeding America**, a nationwide network of food banks.

assistance program clients served are white, 17 % black or African American, and 2 % are Hispanic or Latino. 28% of

Twenty-eight percent of Kentucky clients are children and 20% are seniors. Seventy-five percent of these households are at or below

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school might not be realistic in my current situation.

Currently, I qualify for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an immigration policy that protects certain undocumented youths from deportation and allows them to work. Although the implementation of DACA has allowed me and several hundred thousand other young adults to start on the path to our future, there are several limitations. For one, it does not provide a path to lawful status, which still leaves us with a big question mark, one that some medical schools are now trying to figure out. There has been a significant increase in interest from a number of schools about accepting DACA students, and some have even accepted students into their programs in states such as in California.

Going through the application process this cycle, I had no idea that I was going to encounter so many road-blocks. The trouble really seems to arise because of the uncertainty of the future of the program and the lack of financial aid available to us. However, students have been making their way past these barriers and I intend to do the same. There is nothing that will stop me from pushing the limits and advocating for myself, just like I will advocate for my patients in the future.

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the federal poverty level. Sixty-nine percent of the Kentucky households participating in the food banks reported having to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care at least once in the past 12 months. Diabetes has been reported in an estimated 41 % of these Kentucky households with 65% of participating Kentucky households reporting high blood pressure.

In an effort to provide our patients with an additional food resource, and healthy food preparation education, Family Medicine Newburg Office partnered with Dare to Care from October 9, 2014 - November 11, 2014 to provide a free six week "Cooking Matters" course to our low-income diabetic, hypertensive, obese patients. For two hours once a week from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m., a culinary, nutritional, educational event was hosted by our nutritionist and a volunteer chef. A portable stove was brought into the staff "break-out" area. Participants learned to cook

healthy meals by watching the chef prepare the meals in the break-out area. *(Warning: the entire clinic area smelled wonderful during these classes!)* At the end of each class, participants were given the required groceries for home meal preparation. Participants were introduced to recipes from the healthy cook book given to each patient. Patient comments about the program included:

- "I learned a lot about foods and nutrition"
- "It has made a difference. A lot of things that I never ate before, I now eat."
- "I learned about buying, reading food labels, and nutrition facts."
- "The class made me conscientious of what I buy."

An additional program provided by DARE to CARE is "Cooking Matters at the Store". Tours provide families with hands-on education as they shop for food, giving them skills to compare for cost and nutrition. The tours are two hours

in length and participants learn how to plan and budget for healthy, affordable meals all for under \$10. Tours are led by a wide range of volunteers including culinary professionals, nutrition educators, and cooperative extension agents.

Family Medicine Newburg is hosting its 2nd "Cooking Matters" class starting February 11, 2015. The offering has been very well received by our patients as evidenced by the sign-ups at the front desk. If your medical office is interested in providing an opportunity for your patients to increase their food stores and decrease their chronic disease morbidity by healthy eating consider hosting either "Cooking Matters" or "Cooking Matters at the Store" in your office space or on HSC campus.

Please contact Kimberly@daretocare.org or 502-736-9418 for more information or organizing your class as you partner with DARE to CARE in our community.