



Wellness West

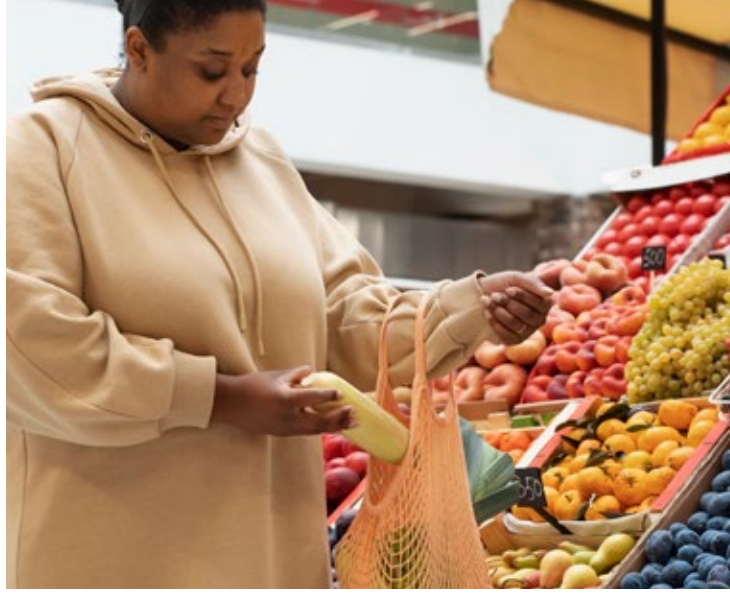
EQUITY IN ACTION

ISSUE 05
FALL 2024

Wellness West Leads Food Insecurity Efforts on Chicago's West Side

Food insecurity is one of the most important social drivers of health and a key cause of health inequities, leading to a series of health and wellness issues that plague individuals, families and communities.

Black and Latinx people, particularly those living on Chicago's South and West Sides, too often do not have sufficient access to healthy food and experience disproportionately worse health outcomes, including life expectancy, compared to white Chicagoans. Loop residents, for example, are expected to live 12 years longer than West Garfield Park residents.



According to the Chicago Food Equity Agenda, 19% of people in the Chicago metro region are food insecure. That figure rises to 29% in majority-Latinx communities and 37% in majority-Black communities. A lack of access to healthy food is associated with a higher risk of chronic diseases, including hypertension, heart disease, hepatitis, stroke, cancer, asthma, diabetes and arthritis.

Among Wellness West's patients, 37% struggle with food insecurity. But Wellness West and its partners are working to address that issue. Key among these efforts is Food Connections, a food benefits program in partnership with Instacart. Eligible Wellness West patients can receive a monthly stipend of \$79 for food. The stipend can be combined with SNAP to make for a convenient grocery shopping experience. Currently more than 600 Wellness West clients participate in the program, most commonly buying staples like milk and eggs.

In addition, Wellness West works in partnership with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Breakthrough, Bethel New Life and others to offer additional food benefit programs.

Register for Food Insecurity Event at Garfield Park Conservatory

Register today to join healthcare transformation stakeholders at Wellness West's annual event, "Bridging the Equity Gap: Food Insecurity on Chicago's West Side," on Thursday, Oct. 10, at Garfield Park Conservatory, 300 N. Central Park Ave in Chicago.

The event will begin with a 30-minute reception and registration at 5:30 p.m., to be followed by a 90-minute program highlighted by a panel of experts discussing how we attempt to achieve health equity by addressing food insecurity. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments will be provided, along with live music and translation services.

Confirmed panelists are:

- **Tesa Anewishki;** President and CEO; The Loretto Hospital
- **Julia Bassett, PhD, MBA;** Office of Community Health Equity and Engagement, System Manager of Health and Community Benefit; Director, Food Is Medicine – Veggie Rx Program; Adjunct Faculty, Department of Health Systems Management; Rush University System for Health
- **James Brooks, DMin, MDiv;** CEO; Lawndale Christian Health Center
- **Sarah Mastrococco;** Vice President and General Manager of Health; Instacart
- **Amy Laboy;** Vice President of Programs and Community Partnerships; Greater Chicago Food Depository
- **Carmen Vergara, RN, MPH;** Vice President, Community Partnerships; Chicago Botanic Garden: Farm on Ogden
- **Moderator: David Miranda;** Journalist and Host.

Sign up today to reserve your spot for this free event: <https://tinyurl.com/mpdpptenp>

BRIDGING THE EQUITY GAP
FOOD INSECURITY ON CHICAGO'S WEST SIDE

Please join us for a panel discussion on the impact of neighborhood food environments on health equity.

Thursday, October 10, 2024
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Garfield Park Conservatory
300 N. Central Park Ave., Chicago, IL 60624

Heavy hors d'oeuvres and refreshments provided
Audio in Español Disponible | Sign Language Available

PANELISTS

- Tesa Anewishki, The Loretto Hospital
- Julia Bassett, PhD, MBA, Rush University System for Health
- James Brooks, DMin, MDiv, Lawndale Christian Health Center
- Amy Laboy, Greater Chicago Food Depository
- Sarah Mastrococco, Instacart
- Carmen Vergara, RN, MPH, Chicago Botanic Garden: Farm on Ogden
- David Miranda, Journalist and Host

MODERATOR

- David Miranda, Journalist and Host

Presented by Wellness West
Partnership for Health Equity
a Healthcare Transformation Collaborative
HTC Healthcare Transformation Collaborative

Click Here for Free Registration
<https://tinyurl.com/mpdpptenp>

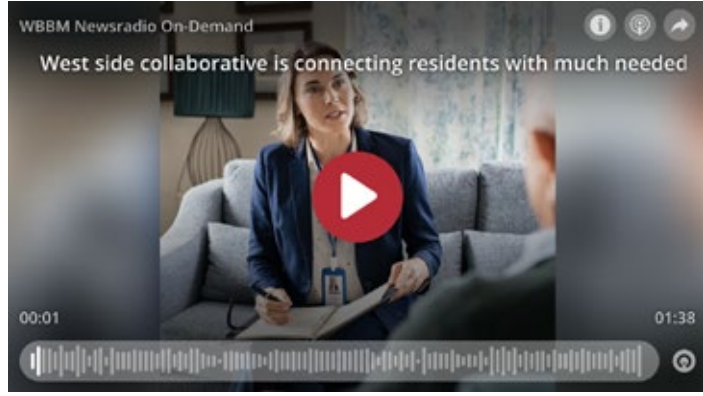
Questions? Email us: WellnessWest@mhichicago.org

TV, Radio Newscasts Tell About Wellness West's Work

Wellness West continues to explain to the world how our healthcare transformation collaborative is addressing health inequity on Chicago's West Side. One recent example was a live interview on ABC-7 Eyewitness News' morning broadcast.

Wellness West Executive Director Misty Drake talked in-studio with ABC-7's Terrell Brown about how our collaborative's partners are seeking to improve health outcomes in 10 zip codes. She explained social drivers of health and their impact, and she outlined food insecurity challenges – and what Wellness West is doing to address them, such as the Food Connections benefits program, a partnership with Instacart.

See the segment: <https://tinyurl.com/5n76dvux>



Another recent story, which aired on WBBM 780 AM and 105.9 FM, addressed how Wellness West's unique community collaborative is providing much-needed resources to West Side residents, who suffer from higher rates of chronic disease and mental illness than other Chicagoans. Wellness West Executive Director Misty Drake was interviewed.

Hear the story: <https://tinyurl.com/2cvdx28y>

Wellness West's Impact Progress To Date

162K Potential attributed lives (44,000 uninsured)	33,722 Health Risk Assessments completed	108 Total community workforce members added to integrated care teams at local medical, social, behavioral health providers	262 Workforce members trained	10,935 Disease management participants	62% Overall control rate for patients with hypertension after 6 months of engagement
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Wellness West Increases its Visibility on West Side

The west-bound side of the Eisenhower Expressway now includes a sign with Wellness West's logo. It is located between Pulaski Road and Cicero Avenue.

Wellness West is sponsoring a garden space to help beautify the West Side. Working with Chicago Gateway Green, Wellness West is helping to fund litter removal, mowing, tree and flower bed maintenance, and plant replacements and enhancements. The sign will receive an estimated 202,4000 vehicular views each day.

Wellness West's site includes plantings of Russian Sage, "Knock Out" roses and Panicum grass that remain colorful through the growing season. Evergreen trees add green luster to the location during the winter months.

In addition to a 4-foot by 3-foot sign, Wellness West will be included in Gateway Green's marketing materials, newsletter and social media.



Airfield Griffo, CCH Patient

Patient Profile: CHWs Help Address Food Insecurity Issues

Airfield Griffo is 65, single, and lives in North Lawndale with very limited resources. She has hypertension, diabetes and endures food insecurity. When she engaged in Wellness West benefits, her diabetes level were not in control (HbA1C >10).

When she was standing in line at the Breakthrough Food Pantry, Airfield met CHW Cornelius Chandler of Breakthrough. He brought in Bernice Moore, a CHW at Cook County Health (Airfield's medical home).

With Bernice's and Cornelius' help, Airfield has navigated complicated insurance issues, learned to understand her medications, joined the Food Connections benefit program (a Wellness West partnership with Instacart), obtained better diabetes monitoring equipment and much more.

Airfield says: "Cornelius and Bernice are my angels. I thank God for them. I trust them with my life because they're always there for me. They always find the answer."

Today Airfield's diabetes levels are now under control: HbA1C<8!



Cornelius Chandler, CHW at Breakthrough



Bernice Moore, CHW at Cook County Health

Board Members Talk About Wellness West

“This wonderful resource harnesses the collective expertise and talent among different organizations to help our patients and our community. It's a new and innovative approach.”



Karen Janousek
Member, Wellness West Board of Directors

Board of Directors

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Our Partners

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| Community Health Centers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Community Health Network • AHS Family Health Center • Alivio Medical Center • Aunt Martha's Health Center • Chicago Family Health Center • Community Health • Erie Family Health Center • Esperanza Health Centers • Friend Health • Lawndale Christian Health Center • Near North Health • PCC Community Wellness Center • PrimeCare Health • Tapestry 360 Health | Hospital Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago • Cook County Health • Humboldt Park Health • The Loretto Hospital • Rush University Medical Center • Sinai Chicago • Ascension Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center | Community-based Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatives Inc. • Bethel New Life • Breakthrough • Erie Neighborhood House • Equal Hope • Healthy Hood • Heartland Human Services • La Casa Norte • North Lawndale Employment Network • Oak Park Regional Housing Authority • Puerto Rican Cultural Center • Spanish Coalition for Housing • Taller de Jose • Thresholds • United for Better Living • Universidad Popular • Westside Health Authority • YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago | Other Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Home Network • Benford Brown & Associates • West Side United |
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