

# fresh prescription

## Recipe for a Healthy Detroit

### 2017 Outcomes Report

Fresh Prescription is a fruit and vegetable prescription program that brings together the healthcare system and the food system, fostering innovative relationships to build a healthy sustainable food system in Detroit. This promising approach to a healthier food system connects patients to fresh, locally-grown produce while providing direct economic benefits to small and midsize farmers. [www.ecocenter.org/fresh-prescription](http://www.ecocenter.org/fresh-prescription)

## Who are the patients & families impacted by the program?



**379** Participants

**+ 681** Household members who shared in the benefits

**= 1060** Impacted

**66%** reported struggling with food insecurity

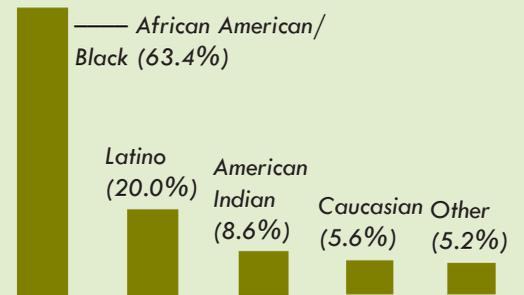
**68%** reported less than \$25,000 in annual household income, with an average of 2-3 people per household

**48%** received federal food assistance (SNAP benefits)

**122** children reached

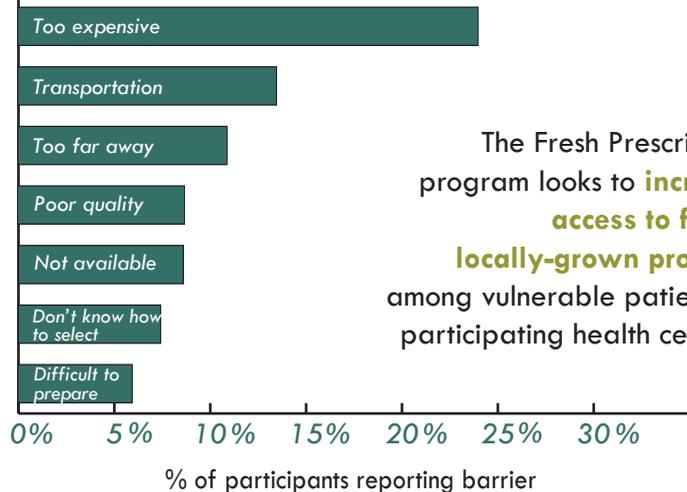
**108** seniors (age 65+) reached (21.1%)

### Race/Ethnicity



“ Nutrition is a big part of my visits, but Fresh Prescription allows me to have back up support for this ” - Medical Provider

### Barriers to accessing fresh fruit & vegetables



The Fresh Prescription program looks to **increase access to fresh, locally-grown produce** among vulnerable patients in participating health centers.



**93%**



Of program participants would **recommend Fresh Prescription** to a friend or relative.

# The Fresh Prescription Process

- 1** Primarily low income patients with chronic disease, those who struggle with food insecurity, and caregivers of children age 0-5 are referred to the program by their health care provider.


- 2** A health professional meets with patients and their families to discuss their health, fruit and vegetable consumption, access to healthy food, motivation to change, and other lifestyle circumstances that impact health.


- 3** Participants receive a prescription to “eat more fruits and vegetables,” set goals for healthy eating, and receive a first 'dose' of healthy eating education.


- 4** Prescriptions, representing a total value of \$40 - \$80, can be filled weekly for \$10 - \$20 of fresh fruits and vegetables at a participating farmer's market, farm stand, or fresh food box delivery service.


- 5** Participants and their families participate in nutrition education and cooking events at weekly markets. Healthcare center staff provide social support for achieving healthy eating goals and making healthy lifestyle changes at the market and through periodic outreach to participants.





## The prescription card

In 2017, Fresh Prescription participants were able “fill their prescription” by shopping for produce at any participating local food vendor. Before participants could only shop at the one farmers market/stand connected to their health center. Prescription dollars are loaded onto debit style cards supported by a mobile app that tracks spending so local food vendors can be reimbursed appropriately. This technology is an important step toward providing more options for filling healthy eating prescriptions throughout communities.



## Building strong local food systems and healthy communities

“This program was amazing. The participants really got to try and use new produce and this helped our business out a lot. We love participating”  
 - Local Produce Vendor



**OVER \$8250** spent on fresh local fruits & vegetables with Fresh Prescription dollars.

**67%** of participants reported **spending their own money** to buy fruits and vegetables (in addition to prescription dollars). Most spent **\$6 or more** each time they shopped.

**\$14000** in total spend by Fresh Prescription participants at market.

**87%** of participants reported they would shop at the farmers market **in the future**.

## Increasing healthy eating

Patients reported significant increases in healthy eating behaviors.

After participating in Fresh Prescription:

**84%** reported increases in consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables.

**83%** reported their household ate more fruits and vegetables each day.

“ It really helped a great deal to be able to get fresh produce! ” - Participant

## Decreasing Unhealthy eating

Patients reported significant decreasing in unhealthy eating.

After participating in Fresh Prescription:

**3 times less per week**

Eating unhealthy foods such as potato chips or chocolate (13x/week to 10x)

**28%**

reduction in sugared beverages consumption per week, from 12 per week to less than 9.

Participants reported a statistically significant **decrease** in the number of times per day they consumed unhealthy foods.

## Changing shopping, cooking & meal preparation behaviors

Patients reported significant improvement in healthy eating behaviors.

After participating in Fresh Prescription:

**63%** reported **trying new fruits & vegetables**.

**69%** reported **buying fruits & vegetables** they did not buy in the past.

**66%** reported **cooking with fruits & vegetables** they did not cook with before.

After participating in the program, participants reported **significant increases in daily consumption of fruit and vegetables**. On average:



**2/3** cup more **fruit** each day



**1/3** cup more **vegetables** each day

“ I was motivated by the the fact that they were going to educate me more about how to use fresh ingredients and learn to more about nutrition ” - Participant

## Increasing knowledge, skills & support for healthy eating



Participants increased their knowledge of **how to select, how to prepare and cook, and how to store** fresh fruits and vegetables. Participants also increased their **perceived ability to count on the people around them for support** in eating more fresh fruits and vegetables by the end of the program.

**89%** of participants reported an increase in their knowledge about the **importance of fresh fruits and vegetables**.

**79%** of participants reported an increase in knowledge about **where to buy fruits and vegetables** in their community.

**67%** of participants reported their **relationship with their primary medical care giver** has improved as a result of the program.

“ My Doctor tells me he can tell I have been applying what I have learned, as I went down to a 7 on my A1C level. I have also been able to lower my medications ” - Participant

“ I’ve got to get to the store to get some fruits and vegetables! I like to keep a lot around the house now so I can eat an apple or orange in the morning, or grab something real quick throughout the day and stay healthy. ”

-Participant

“ Everyone was friendly and nice. They care about us and give us advice. I am thankful that they helped us to set goals for ourselves ”

-Participant

“ Now I am more aware of the importance of impementing these ideas and healthy eating praticies in my life ”

- Participant

## Transforming the health care model

The Fresh Prescription program isn’t just about access to fruits and vegetables. This program brings food into health care and equips health care providers with tools to address healthy eating and food insecurity. Participating clinics teach classes about healthy eating, cooking, and the connection between food & health. Health care providers and health care staff are becoming healthy food ambassadors, connecting patients with healthy resources in their communities.



### Health care centers prescribing fruits & vegetables

Provider	Criteria for referral
 <b>Community Health and Social Services Center (CHASS)</b>	Referred by provider. Focus on high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, pregnant women, caregivers of kids 0-5.
 <b>Covenant Community Care (on Michigan Ave.)</b>	Referred by provider. Focus on hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy, and food insecurity.
 <b>Henry Ford Health System (HFHS)</b>	Referred by provider. Patients with a BMI of 25 or higher. Focus on those with chronic disease and low income.
 <b>Joy Southfield CDC with Covenant Community Care</b>	Referred by provider. Focus on those who live in neighborhood without fresh food access, or those who are overweight or at risk for chronic diseases.
 <b>Mercy Primary Care Center</b>	Referred by provider. Focus on chronic disease, including hypertension and diabetes, as well as food insecurity.

### 2016 Partners & Supporters:



Fresh Prescription is a network of participating health centers and local food retailers such as farmers markets and CSA share boxes in Detroit. Coordination support was provided in 2017 by the Ecology Center in Ann Arbor, MI.

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