

# SEAMAR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS & FOOD LIFELINE HEALTHCARE INITIATIVE

A Pilot Program to Reduce Food Insecurity & Improve Blood Sugar Levels for Patients with Diabetes in South King County

70% of food bank client households stated they had to choose between buying food or paying for medical care.

## About the Healthcare Initiative

Noticing the limited connections between healthcare facilities and hunger relief organizations, Sea Mar & Food Lifeline partnered to create the Healthcare Initiative in 2017.

This partnership connects food bank clients with healthcare services and healthcare patients with food resources to ensure households do not have to decide between medical care or food.

Food Lifeline and Sea Mar's goal was to test whether the program reduced food insecurity and lowered blood sugar levels among patients with Type 2 diabetes.

## The Healthcare Initiative Pilot Program

Food Lifeline brings fresh fruits and vegetables to the Sea Mar clinic in Burien twice a month, and the South Park clinic once a month.

Patients identified as food insecure with an A1c > 8.0 were given a voucher to use at the on-site Food Lifeline mobile distribution.

Over 200 patients with Type 2 diabetes were initially enrolled in the program to measure blood sugar levels, food security, and other health outcomes.

Participants with vouchers were able to access the fresh produce for an additional hour before the resource was open to all.

## About Food Lifeline

Food Lifeline rescues millions of pounds of nutritious foods from farmers, manufacturers, grocery stores, restaurants, and retailers that would otherwise go to waste.

Food is then distributed to over 300 food banks, shelters, and meal programs throughout Western Washington.



## Results & Next Steps

Participating patients showed an average half-point reduction in blood sugar levels.

Patients who completed post-program surveys indicated that the food they received through the program improved their ability to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Food Lifeline & Sea Mar are working to refine the evaluation design and streamline the data collection process.

The hope is to make the program more accessible and scale it to other Sea Mar clinics in a sustainable manner.

Thank you Sea Mar and FoodLifeline for your contribution to the King County Healthcare & Food Insecurity Learning Network!