

Food Policy
COUNCIL

JOHNSON COUNTY
KANSAS

The Johnson County Food Policy Council (FPC) serves as an advisory body to the Johnson County, Kansas Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and other decision makers in Johnson County.

The Vision of Johnson County Food Policy Council is to improve the health and well-being of citizens, communities and the environment of Johnson County.

The Mission of Johnson County Food Policy Council is to create a just, equitable and sustainable food system accessible to all in Johnson County through policy recommendations, education and collaborative work.

JOHNSON COUNTY is served by several large healthcare organizations with innumerable clinics, hundreds of healthcare providers and several safety net organizations. Even with such a robust network of organizations and programs aimed at addressing the food insecurity problem, the need for healthy, affordable food is still challenging.

Addressing SDOH's Are Important in Addressing Food Insecurity

As healthcare delivery moves towards a population health paradigm they are recognizing the significance of addressing **Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)**. SDOH's are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Research shows only a portion of health can be attributed to medical/clinical care.

20%
CLINICAL
CARE



40%
SOCIO-ECONOMIC
FACTORS



10%
PHYSICAL
ENVIRONMENT



30%
HEALTH
BEHAVIORS



To improve the health of the communities they serve, hospitals must recognize and address the behavioral, socio-economic and environmental factors that contribute to health and how it affects food insecurity of our community.



Healthcare providers are uniquely positioned to address **FOOD INSECURITY** and health as they counsel and support patients in preventing and treating chronic disease.

OVER
60,000
FOOD INSECURE
JOHNSON COUNTY
RESIDENTS STRUGGLE
TO OBTAIN HEALTHY,
AFFORDABLE
FOOD

FOOD INSECURITY refers to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

Healthcare Systems Should Get Involved

- Food insecurity is a social determinate of health.
- Hunger is associated with serious medical conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and poverty-related obesity.
- Left untreated, hunger will undermine a patient's health and contribute to the onset – or worsening – of disease that can lead to an increase in hospital readmissions and medical treatments.
- Hunger increases the cost of health care in both children and the elderly.



Healthcare Systems Can Affect Healthy Food Access

- Operate federal nutrition and food assistance programs
- Conduct outreach and eligibility screening for nutrition assistance programs
- Connect patients with food/nutrition resources
- Offer access to fresh produce through on-site gardens and farmers' markets
- Teach nutrition education and cooking demonstrations

TAKE ACTION

1. Screen patients for hunger and food insecurity by integrating the Children's HealthWatch Hunger Vital Sign™, a two-question screening tool based on the U.S. Household Food Security Scale, as part of annual population health surveys given to children and adults at clinical and hospital visits.
2. Educate and train leaders and staff on food insecurity and the importance of universal screening. Include corporate food insecurity screening in the institutional workflow.
3. Collect data to inform programming and public policy regarding the health impact of food insecurity.