Healthy Food in Health Care Work Group

Connecticut

NEW ENGLAND TEAM

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CORE PARTNERS

Governor's Council on Agricultural Development
Connecticut Food System Alliance
UCONN Extension
Farm to Institution New England
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance
Healthier Hospitals Initiative
HCWH Global Climate Initiative
Farm to School Network
Real Food Challenge

Return on Investment

As a result of the Affordable Care Act, ACO providers now have an incentive to promote population health. Activities of this work group aim to:

- Increase access to healthy food
- Create an environment of health for hospital staff and visitors
- Communicate demand to the supply chain to make healthy food affordable
- Reduce the overuse of antibiotics to impact the emergence of antibiotic resistant infections
- Reduce individual and community exposure to environmental toxins in our food system that promote chronic illness
- Promote disaster resilience by building a regional food system

Through participation, your facility becomes a key player in prevention-based care. Healthier staff and community means lower health care costs.

Resource Needs

The path to success is paved by champions in the sector. Time, money and support are the 3 key resources of success. The following is necessary for us to support your internal efforts:

Food Service Director participation

Work group and sub-committee meetings are held on a quarterly basis and may require interim participation for follow up communication, information gathering, and shared strategies to move this work forward

Hospital Leadership Support

Regular touch-base meetings are suggested for participants to connect with hospital leadership on progress and potential needs. It is important to articulate goals to contracted food service management companies, group purchasing organizations or vendors through contract language.

Budget Flexibility

Although many sustainability initiatives yield a cost savings there are times when product shifts or new purchasing pathways require an initial investment. Working with your team to determine a manageable margin during this transition period will assist in shifting the broader market. By showcasing this demand, you are playing a critical role in shifting the food system towards increased accessibility and lower costs for healthy, sustainable foods.

Healthy Food in Health Care (HFHC) is a national initiative of Health Care Without Harm (HCWH). We harness the purchasing power and expertise of the health care sector to advance the development of a sustainable food system. The program provides education, tools, resources, and support for facilities to implement programs that explicitly connect all aspects of the food system with health. We catalyze sustainable procurement efforts, create clinician advocates, and inspire health care institutions to become leaders in shaping a food system that supports prevention-based health care.



Connecticut Work Group

This is one of 7 health care food service learning collaboratives underway in New England. This workgroup is composed of representatives from Connecticut hospitals that are currently engaged in healthy food work and are considered leaders in the implementation of innovative healthy food and beverage strategies. Participating facilities utilize this forum to identify opportunities to mobilize the groups' collective power and social influence to improve environmental and population health, support the local economy, and achieve the goals of the Healthier Hospitals Initiative Food Challenge. This work group has focused on education about food system issues and identifying resources for increasing purchases of local and sustainable foods.

Connecticut Food Facts

- Over a ten-year period, Connecticut obesity rates increased from 18% in 2003 to 25.6% in 2013.
- The Governor's Council for Agricultural Development (GCAD) is creating a long-range strategic plan for Connecticut agriculture called Grow Connecticut Farms. The plan was initiated as a result of findings from a year of work by 12 workgroups, three of which were focused on farm-to institution as a critical access point for healthy food.
- The most recent USDA data showed that Connecticut led all of New England in farm growth with a 22 percent increase in the number of farms created since 2007, adding 1,061 additional farms for a total of 5,977. Land included in those farms totaled 436,406 acres, up 8 percent.
- buyCTgrown, a campaign from CiitySeed and state partners has a 10% local challenge for individuals, businesses, and institutions.

Getting Involved

FOOD SERVICE DIRECTORS & PURCHASING AGENTS

Contact Us to participate in Work Group activities.

CLINICIANS

Contact HCWH Senior Clinical Advisor to join the growing network of clinicians active in policy and supporting institutional change.

ADMINISTRATORS

Enroll in the Healthier Hospitals Initiative
www.healthierhospitals.org

Healthier Hospitals INITIATIVE

Learn more at:
healthyfoodinhealthcare.org