

# Medicaid + Medicare Food Insecurity Impact Report





## Combat food insecurity for Medicare Advantage members with nutrition benefits

### // 1 in 14 older adults face food insecurity

Food insecurity is a common, and complex, problem, particularly for older adults. In fact, studies show that 5.2 million adults over 60, or 1 in 14, were food insecure in 2019 and due to the hardships caused by the pandemic, the numbers are getting worse.

Older adults face unique challenges that contribute to food insecurity such as impeded access from reduced mobility, higher incidences of chronic conditions and disability, and lack of motivation and loneliness. But as a Medicare Advantage plan, you have an opportunity to address the issue by offering nutrition benefits that make healthy eating easy, affordable and accessible.

### // How social factors contribute to food insecurity

Food insecurity is greatly influenced by social determinants of health (SDoH). But what exactly are SDoH? They're the environmental conditions where people live, work, play, learn, and worship that impact their ability to access nutritious foods, health services, a safe home environment, and much more. These determinants impact people differently based on discrepancies in factors, such as race, education, and social status, that create health inequities — the unfair and avoidable disparities in health between various social groups.<sup>3</sup>

### // The relationship between food insecurity and health

Without proper nutrition, food insecure individuals are at a higher risk for costly and preventable chronic diseases.<sup>4</sup> As a result, there are racial disparities in chronic disease incidence.<sup>3</sup> For instance, compared to white neighborhoods, black communities have almost twice as many fast-food restaurants<sup>5</sup> (areas known as “food swamps”) which contribute to chronic disease more than “food deserts,” or areas that lack in quality food options.<sup>6</sup>

### // Creating food security with Foodsmart

Foodsmart is the comprehensive foodcare solution to help you identify and combat food insecurity for your Medicare Advantage

	
<b>Ms. Pea</b> Lives in <b>FOOD SECURITY</b>	<b>Mr. Tom</b> Lives in <b>FOOD INSECURITY</b>
<b>AVAILABILITY</b> Abundant access to a variety of grocery stores near the home.	<b>AVAILABILITY</b> One grocery store far away, mostly convenient stores and fast foods.
<b>ACCESS</b> Moderate-high income that allows for flexible grocery shopping. Food is always in stock. Reliable transportation.	<b>ACCESS</b> Low-modest income. After bills, not a large budget for food. Inconsistent food supply. Unreliable or public transport.
<b>STABILITY</b> Reliable income and consistent schedule. Can plan ahead.	<b>STABILITY</b> Works odd jobs so schedule varies. Meal planning is a challenge.
<b>SKILLS</b> Learned to cook family meals growing up. Has free time to practice and try new things.	<b>SKILLS</b> Parents worked odd hours and relied on fast food. Not much time to learn new skills.

Ms. Pea's living conditions make it much easier for her to eat a healthy diet compared to Mr. Tom. Over time, she is much more likely to experience better health.





members. Founded on the principle that every person deserves to eat well and be healthy, we're the world's largest telenutrition and foodcare network backed by a national network of registered dietitians. Our program is designed to yield consistently healthier food choices, lasting behavior change, and long-term results.

## // How we work

To begin, a registered dietitian meets with your members, offers personalized nutrition counsel, and identifies who in your population is food insecure. Then, we work with members through our supportive digital platform to help them create lasting change. Along the way, we measure progress to ensure everyone is on the right path to food security. To maximize the health of those who need it most, our registered dietitians can even refer members struggling with stress management or mental health concerns affecting food insecurity to other programs you may offer.

Here are some of the key features of Foodsmart that address food insecurity:

AVAILABILITY	ACCESS	STABILITY	SKILLS
Comparison of grocery prices like Priceline (saving 34% per order) and ordering for delivery	Availability via phone, computer, or app	Meal planning tool for cost-conscious/SNAP-friendly recipes	Telenutrition for personalized advice with a registered dietitian
Helping identify those who are food insecure, offering targeted food subsidies, and measuring progress	SNAP/EBT for buying groceries through integrated partners	CookItNow feature for suggesting meals with ingredients they have on hand	Registered dietitians to teach members to create health goals, plan meals, and enroll in SNAP/EBT if qualified
Managing healthy food delivery with Grubhub integration	Saving two hours per week from grocery ordering to meal planning		

## // Clinically proven results

Numerous clinical and peer-reviewed studies have proven that Foodsmart changes eating behaviors, leading to improvements in chronic conditions, overall health and food security status:

<b>25%</b> of food-insecure members improved food security status using Foodsmart.	Medicaid and Medicare members were <b>2.8x</b> more likely to improve nutrition with Foodsmart. <sup>7</sup>	Foodsmart is clinically proven to change eating behaviors, leading to <b>lasting improvements</b> in weight, A1C, cholesterol, and blood pressure. <sup>7,8,9,10</sup>	<b>33%</b> of members with hypertension Improved their blood pressure. <sup>11</sup>
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**Create food security for your Medicare Advantage members. Contact a Foodsmart expert at [inquiries@foodsmart.com](mailto:inquiries@foodsmart.com) to get started.**



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- 11- Bakre S, Shea B, Scharen J, Langheier J, Hu EA. **Improved blood pressure control among individuals with hypertension who used a digital, personalized nutrition platform: Longitudinal study.** [In progress].