

Prescription for Health 2022 Outcome Report



PRESCRIPTION *for* HEALTH

Prescription for Health was generously funded by Trinity Health in 2022 with additional financial support. Washtenaw County Health Department coordinates the program. Prescription for Health connects the **medical system** and the **food sector** by creating a relationship between clinic staff, their patients, and local farmers markets. Health care providers assign “prescriptions” to their patients to eat more fruits and vegetables. These prescriptions can be “filled” at local farmers markets.

Participants receive **\$100** in tokens to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets, as well as nutrition education and support. Participants also work with Community Health Workers to set health goals.

During 2022, **452 patients** from 13 different health clinics and agencies serving low-income individuals participated. A total of **\$26,801.12** was spent on fruits, vegetables, and fruit/vegetable plants/seeds, improving participants’ access to healthy foods and supporting the local food system.

“Without the program, our intake of fruits & veggies would be so much less. The tokens provided to us have helped us to eat many more vegetables and fruits that we could not afford otherwise.”

– 2022 Program Participant

Key Findings

- Participant consumption of fruits and vegetables **increased by nearly 1 cup per day** from pre- to post-program (n=33; mean=0.95; p<.005)
- As a result of participating in the Prescription for Health program:
 - 80% of participants reported that they **managed their health conditions better** (n=56)
 - 79% of participants reported that they **tried a new fruit or vegetable** (n=56)
 - 59% of participants reported that they **became more physically active** (n=56)
- 91% of participants said that the **Community Health Workers supported** them in eating healthier (n=54)

Participant Demographics

- 50% lived in zip codes 48197 or 48198 (n=452)
- 77% identified as female/woman, 22% as male/man, and 1% preferred not to answer (n=132)
- 52% identified as White or Caucasian, 34% as African American or Black, 8% as Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Origin, 5% as Asian American or Asian, 4% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 1% as Middle Eastern or North African, 5% preferred to self-identify, and 5% preferred not to answer (n=132)
- Average age: 47 years; age range: 3 years – 96 years (n=449)
- 35% reported having at least one child living in their household (n=132)
- 58% reported that they had previously participated in the Prescription for Health program (n=130)

High Risk for Food Insecurity

- 40% had a yearly income of less than \$15,000 (n=123)
- 57% reported that they or others in their home had cut the size of meals, skipped meals, and/or bought fewer healthy foods within the past year because of a lack of money for food (n=131)
- 43% reported using SNAP benefits (n=128)

Special thanks to our partners:

Aid in Milan, Chelsea Hospital Diabetes Education, Faith in Action, Hope Clinic, Michigan Medicine Chelsea Health Center, Michigan Medicine Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools, Michigan Medicine Ypsilanti Health Center, Packard Health, Trinity Health Academic Internal Medicine – Ann Arbor Campus, Trinity Health Academic Obstetrics & Gynecology – Ann Arbor Campus, Trinity Health IHA Medical Group, Primary Care – Milan, Trinity Health Neighborhood Primary Care – Ypsilanti, Trinity Health St. Joseph Mercy Ann Arbor, Chelsea Farmers Market, Growing Hope’s Ypsilanti Farmers Markets, Nemeth Greenhouse & Farms, Pittsfield Township Farmers Market, The Farm at Trinity Health – Ann Arbor Campus, and Zilke Vegetable Farm.



How the Program Worked

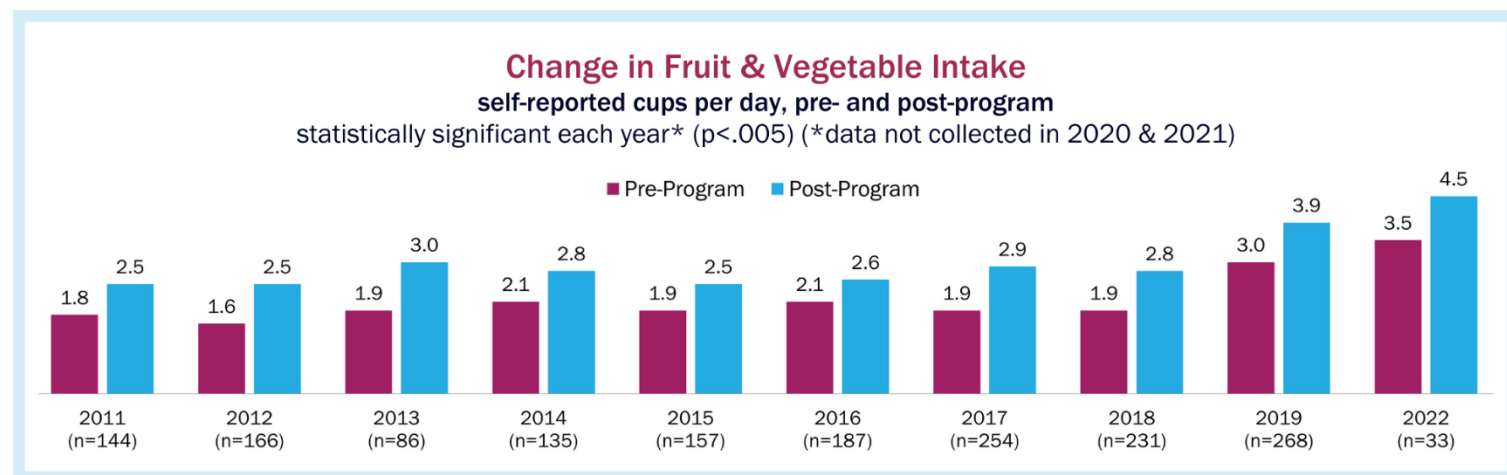
The Prescription for Health (PFH) program is an important asset and resource access point for many throughout Washtenaw County. The [Michigan Food Environment Scan](#) identifies Prescription for Health as a successful community food intervention in the area of health care focused efforts.¹

Clinic staff referred patients to the program based on food access difficulties, chronic disease risk, and interest. PFH program staff distributed enrollment packets to those referred. Each enrollment packet contained program information, participant engagement materials, healthy eating and/or living goal setting instructions, and \$100 of paper tokens to spend on produce. Participants “filled” their prescriptions at participating local farmers markets and farm stands.

Since 2013, Community Health Workers (CHWs) have been formally integrated into the program to provide more peer social support, decrease barriers, and reduce costs. Participants could interact in-person with the CHWs at the PFH table at the farmers markets. CHWs also called participants to offer support remotely. CHWs assisted with goal setting, offered support and reminders, and provided referrals to community resources and other healthy eating resources, such as SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks.

Monthly materials were created to further encourage participant engagement and provide support. The materials centered around healthy eating and/or living and consisted of a monthly PFH newsletter which highlighted a fruit or vegetable in season, a goal tracking sheet, a health education handout, and a corresponding activity. Materials were distributed in-person at the farmers markets and on the PFH website. Participants that completed the monthly goal tracking sheet and corresponding activity were entered into an end-of-season drawing. Participants were encouraged to participate every month and participants received an extra entry for turning in their entry to the CHWs. There were 178 total submissions.

“It really help me put fruit & veg on my plate every meal. My kids love the different fruit that we don't see in the store.”
– 2022 Program Participant



Program Survey Results

Pre-program survey results were obtained from 29% of participants and post-program survey from 12% of participants. Participants reported that the CHWs were helpful, supportive, friendly, and encouraged them on their goals. Participants also shared that the PFH program was excellent, informative, fun, and made a positive difference in their health. Participants stated the program enabled them to afford and access fruits and vegetables, while providing social connection. Additionally, participants indicated they felt healthier, enjoyed trying new foods, and became more physically active.

Economic Impact

PFH participants spent a total of:

- \$11,629.12 at Growing Hope’s Ypsilanti Farmers Markets
- \$8,594 at the Chelsea Farmers Market
- \$3,404 at the Pittsfield Township Farmers Market
- \$2,954 at the farm stand partners in Milan
- \$220 at The Farm at Trinity Health – Ann Arbor Campus



¹Laing, S., Kato, C. Kutch, L., & Fluegeman, S. (2019). Michigan Health Endowment Fund Food Environment Scan: A project completed by MPH for the Nutrition & Healthy Lifestyles Program. Okemos, MI: Center for Health Communities, MPH.