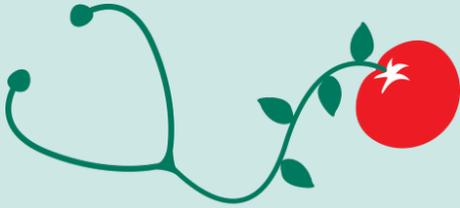


# Prescription for Health

## 2013 Outcome Report



### PRESCRIPTION *for* HEALTH

Prescription for Health connects the medical system and the food sector by creating a relationship between clinic staff, their patients and the local farmers market. Health care providers write “prescriptions” for their patients to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Participants receive **\$50** in tokens to spend like cash at local farmers’ markets, as well as nutrition education and support.

During 2013, **151** patients from three different health clinics serving low-income residents participated.

A total of **\$6,875** was spent on fresh fruits and vegetables, improving participants’ access to healthy foods and supporting local food systems.

#### ***Special thanks to our partners:***

*Neighborhood Family Health Center, Packard Health, Faith In Action, Downtown and Depot Town Ypsilanti Farmers Markets (run by Growing Hope) and Chelsea Bushel Basket Farmers Market.*

### Key Findings for All Participants:

- Patient consumption of fruits and vegetables **increased by one full cup per day** from pre- to post-program (n=87; mean=1.1; p<.001)
- Patients showed an **increase in self-reported health**, with the average changing from “fair” pre-program to “good” post-program (n=87; p<.001)
- As a result program participation, many participants “strongly agree” that they feel **more motivated** (54%) and **more confident** (49%) when it comes to making healthy eating changes
- 89% reported that the program **helped them manage a health condition** better
- **87%** of participants reported knowing that a Bridge/EBT card (food stamps) could be used at the farmers market post-program, compared with only **59%** pre-program

### Participant Demographics:

- 76% female
- 45% white, 37% black, 8% Latino/Hispanic, 1% Native American/American Indian and 9% indented as two or more races or other
- Average age 52; age range 16 - 89
- 55% reported having at least one child living in their household
- 59% reported that they had previously participated in the Prescription for Health program

### Participants were at high risk for food insecurity:

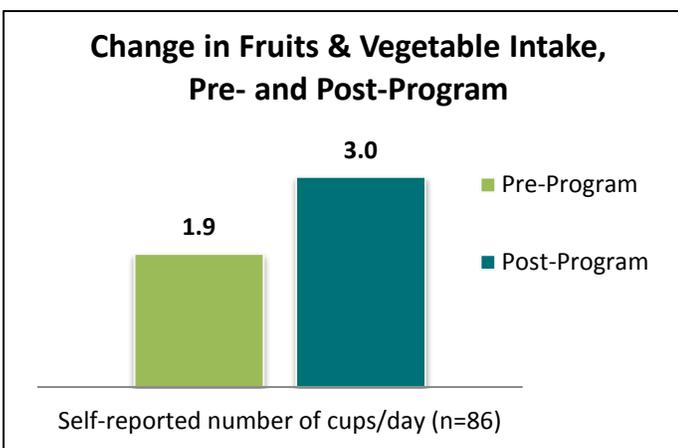
- 72% had a yearly income of less than \$15,000
- 74% had cut the size of meals or skipped meals within the past year because of a lack of money for food
- 70% use a Bridge/EBT card (food stamps)

## How the program worked:

Clinic staff identified patients for the program based on food access difficulties, chronic disease risk and interest. Staff referred patients to a group enrollment session at the clinic. When the patient attended the enrollment visit, he/she received information about the program and engaged in a discussion about the link between health, chronic disease and food choices. The patient set specific goals for healthy eating and received a "prescription" for fruits and vegetables. Patients "filled" their prescriptions at the local farmers market.

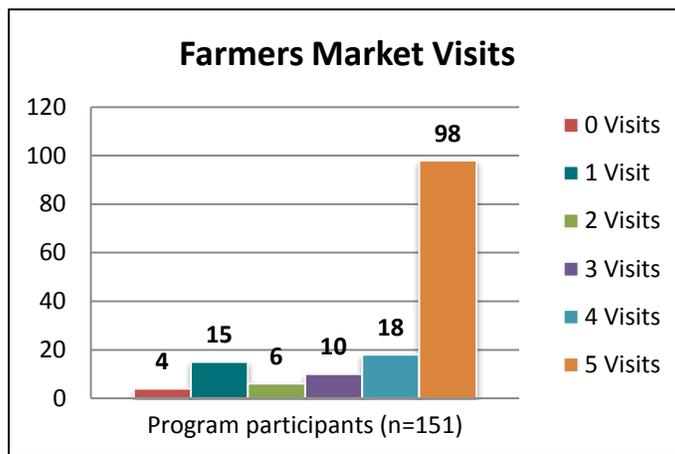
When a patient came to the Prescription for Health table at the farmers market, staff reviewed his/her prescription card and assisted the patient in setting a weekly goal. After the educational support, the patient received \$10 in tokens to spend on produce at the farmers' market. Up to \$50, or five visits, was allocated for each enrolled patient.

In 2013, Community Health Advocates were formally integrated into the program to provide more social support and to reduce costs. Advocates filled key roles in the program, assisting with enrollment and goal setting; calling patients to offer support and reminders; and providing referrals to other resources, such as EBT/Bridge Card and Double Up Food Bucks.



*"My health is getting better, and I've lost weight. I'm getting more vegetables."*

*-Program Participant 2013*



## Post-program survey results:

Post-program survey results were obtained from 60% of program participants.

Of the patients who visited the market, 64% used other forms of payment to buy additional food at the market, and 95% stated they were likely to visit the market again in the future.

Almost all enrolled patients visited the market at least once (97%). The majority (65%) used all five of their allotted market visits; many also reported that they continued to visit the market even after they spent all of their program tokens. Among patients that were unable to visit at least five times, health problems and transportation issues were the most frequently cited barriers.

## Community Health Advocates:

The Community Health Advocates reported they were "being stopped all over town" and at other events and asked about the Prescription for Health program. They also reported hearing success stories from participating patients and their families:

- One family started eating a salad or vegetable side dish every day and using fruits and vegetables instead of snack foods. All family members indicated they lost weight and improved their blood pressure readings.
- One gentleman said his ability to walk and stand improved after he lost weight by eating more fruits and vegetables through the program.