



Food Insecurity Program reaches out to patients.

Patients in need are getting a boost when they leave MedStar Washington Hospital Center. The hospital's Food Insecurity Program sends food home with patients identified as food insecure. They also receive resources for additional help. The devastation caused by the pandemic has brought food insecurity into sharper focus, according to Kathryn Powers, director, Clinical Resource Management (CRM).

"If the pandemic has done us any favors, it has shone a spotlight on the problem that millions of Americans don't have enough food," says Powers. "Before COVID-19, patients were often reluctant to admit they needed food."

The program provides boxed meals to-go for patients being discharged. The boxes contain three non-perishable meals—breakfast, lunch, and dinner, provided by the Dietary department.

All identified patients are referred to a Community Health Advocate for help acquiring additional food. "We reach out to resources in community agencies," says Powers, "depending on their individual needs."

The CRM also manages a food pantry for staff, which has helped many who are suffering, particularly through the pandemic. MedStar Washington staff may visit the in-house pantry for nonperishable food items as needed. To date, the pantry is self-funded by staff and donations.

"The publicity around the impact of COVID-19 has brought the problem of food insecurity out of the shadows and into the public domain."

—Kathryn Powers, Director,
Clinical Resource Management

Letter from the president.

Despite the impact of COVID-19, MedStar Washington Hospital Center has continued to care for our community. We know that far too many of our patients face challenges, especially with the pandemic, which impact their health outcomes once they leave the hospital.

Our community health advocate program has helped hundreds of patients navigate the barriers to better health.

Two programs of note reach some of those most desperate for our assistance—the Food Insecurity Program and the Medication Assisted Treatment Program.* These are just two of the programs that we, as a leader in the community, believe are vitally important in advancing the health of all our patients. We want to do all we can to ensure that when patients return home, they can continue on the road to a healthier future.

Gregory J. Argyros, MD

President,
MedStar Washington Hospital Center

* See the program descriptions elsewhere in this report.

Targeting patients at risk for drug or alcohol abuse.

At MedStar Washington Hospital Center, we are actively addressing the needs of patients who have substance use problems. Every patient who comes to the Emergency department is screened by nurses trained to look for signs of substance abuse. Screenings are reviewed by Peer Recovery Coaches, who are associates trained in substance use treatment and in recovery themselves. The Peer Recovery Coaches link willing patients with substance use treatment services in the community. If a patient with substance use issues is admitted to an inpatient medical unit, a Peer Recovery Coach follows up with them while they are in the inpatient services.

The Emergency Department Screening Behavioral Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Program is an evidence-based, cost-effective national program with proven results. Since its inception in June 2019, more than 111,000 patients have been screened. Ten percent of those were positive for substance abuse; 46 percent of those accepted brief interventions. Of those, 38 percent accepted referrals for treatment.

The goal of the initial screening—the SBIRT program—is to identify people with substance use disorders or those at risk for developing these disorders and help them reduce or stop alcohol and other drug use, says Chandra Colvin, PsyD, LICSW, Inpatient Psychiatry & Psychiatric Admissions Clinical Services Director. “We try to meet the patients where they are. If they are not ready to address their substance abuse issues, we provide information and make referrals for them.” Patients seen in the Emergency department or admitted to the hospital for a drug overdose are referred to the Overdose Survivors Peer Recovery Coach who follows them in the community and links them to substance use treatment as requested.

Due to the positive impact of the SBIRT program, the hospital has expanded this program to inpatient services. The new program, Hospital Based Peer Support System, offers additional support for patients with substance use issues who are not seen in the Emergency department. This expanded service provides additional resources for our patient population.



Peer Recovery Coaches: Ean Bond, Keith Martin, and LaVon Williams

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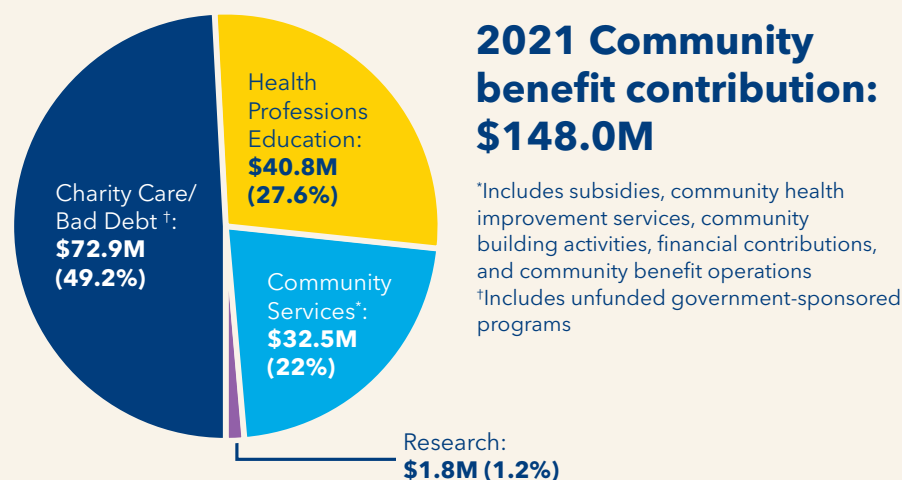
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It's how we treat people.