

Medically-Tailored Meals Associated with Reduced Hospital Utilizations



Over a one-year period, Food & Friends' medically tailored meals were linked to reductions in hospital charges, potentially avoidable utilization (PAU), and non-outpatient hospital visits for its clients living in Maryland.¹

Reductions vary by subgroups as shown below.

In 2023, Food & Friends delivered 1.9M medically tailored meals and groceries to clients across 13 Maryland and Virginia counties and Washington, DC. Of those, 800,000 medically tailored meals were provided to clients in Maryland. These clients were referred by healthcare personnel, offered a nutrition assessment with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist, and began a meal and care plan tailored for their specific medical circumstances. The summary below relied on data from the six months prior to program enrollment and six months after to assess program impact on hospital charges, potentially avoidable utilizations (PAU), and non-outpatient hospital visits. The sample included clients who received services between January 2021 and December 2023.

OVERALL SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

women 61%

men 39%

<1% gender diverse

66 yrs

Average age²

79%

BIPOC³

57%

at or below the federal poverty line

AVERAGE AMONG ALL CLIENTS

(n=1,367)

37%

(\$9,020)

REDUCTION
IN CHARGES



45%

(0.17 PAU)

REDUCTION
IN PAU



34%

(0.61 VISITS)

REDUCTION
IN HOSPITAL VISITS



AVERAGE AMONG HIGH-COST PATIENTS

(n=260)

67%

(\$52,555)

REDUCTION
IN CHARGES



63%

(0.65 PAU)

REDUCTION
IN PAU



58%

(1.97 VISITS)

REDUCTION
IN HOSPITAL VISITS



High-cost patients are those in the top 25% of hospital charges.

High-cost patients accounted for 75% of hospital charges in the pre-intervention period

High-cost patients were more likely to be Black (vs NH White) compared to the rest of the sample

AVERAGE AMONG THOSE WITH CHRONIC ILLNESSES

31%

Those with
DIABETES
n=418
(primary or comorbid):

36%

(\$7,438)

REDUCTION
IN CHARGES



30%

(0.09 PAU)

REDUCTION
IN PAU



14%

(0.20 VISITS)

REDUCTION
IN HOSPITAL VISITS



24%

Those with
**CARDIO-VASCULAR
DISEASE**
n=332
(primary or comorbid):

32%

(\$8,332)

REDUCTION
IN CHARGES



51%

(0.27 PAU)

REDUCTION
IN PAU



30%

(0.59 VISITS)

REDUCTION
IN HOSPITAL VISITS



16%

Those with
**KIDNEY DISEASE &
RECEIVING DIALYSIS**
n=215
(primary or comorbid):

NO SIGNIFICANT

REDUCTION
IN CHARGES

32%

(0.19 PAU)

REDUCTION
IN PAU



NO SIGNIFICANT

REDUCTION
IN HOSPITAL VISITS

¹ The topline findings presented are based on t-tests and do not include adjustment for any covariates. The sample included inpatient, emergency department, and observation visits.

² Mean 66, median 68; range from 6-101

³ BIPOC includes everyone who is not non-Hispanic White.