

Food is Medicine

IMPROVING HEALTH THROUGH NUTRITION

Access to nutritious food is essential for good health, but many people face long-term health risks due to food insecurity. Without affordable, healthy options, conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease become more common, worsening health inequalities.

The Virginia Food Access Coalition (VFAC) tackles this by offering "Food is Medicine" solutions, including Medically Tailored Groceries, Produce Prescriptions, Nutrition Education, Medically Tailored Meals, and Food and Nutrition Referrals. These programs aim to improve health and food access for everyone.



TAKE ACTION

The Commonwealth of Virginia can **improve health outcomes and lower costs** for Medicaid members by incorporating Food is Medicine programs. Legislation should direct DMAS to seek approval for a benefit making these programs available to at-risk populations.



WHY IT MATTERS

- + Poor nutrition is the #1 driver of death and disability in the U.S
- + On average, individuals facing hunger spend \$1,539 more on healthcare each year
- + Food insecure adults are 2-3x more likely to suffer from diabetes
- + A Virginia-based pilot showed that medically-tailored groceries significantly improved blood sugar, blood pressure, and reduced emergency department visits

The **Virginia Food is Medicine Coalition** provides thought leadership and promotes collaboration among more than 40 service providers, health plans, hospital systems, and foundations.



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