

Siouxland Community Health Center

SOUTH DAKOTA, IOWA, NEBRASKA

INTEGRATING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND GROWING AN EXTRA ROW

When many of us think of South Dakota, Iowa or Nebraska, we don't think of refugees, HIV and immigrants. But where these three states meet, so do these special populations. Siouxland Community Health Center serves them as well as other rural

residents in the heartland of the United States.

Siouxland has a large number of Somali refugees and immigrants who work in meatpacking. They often arrive with nothing but a few clothes and do not have formal organizational support. The center has responded with a clothing program as well as grocery gift cards. They purchase discounted grocery cards from a number of area grocers, and case managers then give these to patients in need. Mari Kaptain-Dahlen, who leads food security efforts at Siouxland, reports that cards are given away on a daily basis.

Siouxland's system goes beyond free grocery cards. It addresses the social determinants of health that lead to hunger. Kaptain-Dahlen recognizes that the

populations they serve need more than food and clothes. They may lack safe housing or equipment with which to cook a meal. Language, literacy and transportation are real obstacles.

Siouxland has its own foundation to address the unmet needs of their community. If transportation is a barrier, food is delivered. If housing is an issue, legal aid is available. For patients living with HIV, additional supports are available. Partners from the community assist the foundation: Walmart gives discounted clothing and a local union adopted them as their holiday charity. Emergency dental needs are supported by the local hospital.

Siouxland encourages local gardeners and farmers to sign up and "grow an extra row" of produce to assist those in need. The food is collected and distributed to participating community agencies.

The Grow an Extra Row initiative is done in collaboration with the district health department. It is now in its third year at the center. Patients in need receive food prescriptions from staff. Food is delivered seasonally from May through October, transforming the lobby of the health center into a mini farmers market. Patients, staff and growers are enthusiastic about the benefits of this program.

Siouxland Community Health Center recognizes food security as integral to health and is responding in a coordinated fashion that allows them to track and respond to their patients' needs. This Tri-State area has a short growing season, harsh winters and a diverse rural population.



INTEGRATING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH INTO ALL ASPECTS OF CARE

Siouxland Community Health Center was an original pilot site for the Protocol for Responding to and Assessing Patients' Assets, Risks, and Experiences (PRAPARE)¹, incorporating social determinants of health data into patients' electronic health records using GE Centricity. Siouxland is now aiming to screen all patients using PRAPARE, which includes food security, transportation issues, language used, educational level and other social risk factors. The health center also documents which patients report needing legal aid assistance. Needs related to this information are flagged for the care team to see.

In addition to food issues, the center has realized how many needs there are related to substandard housing for their populations. Iowa Legal Aid

is partnering with them to find solutions to problems such as mold, faulty heating and safety hazards. The response has been powerful, with many more patients now sharing needs that have previously been hidden. The providers have stated they had no idea their patients were facing so many problems that clearly impacted their ability to be healthy.

The center plans to examine next the relationship between meeting some of the social needs and impacting health outcomes. Iowa Legal Aid is working with a children's hospital, tracking emergency department use and hospital admissions as it relates to asthma and substandard housing. The center hopes to collaborate with them on a similar model.

INTERVENTIONS

USING SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH QUESTIONS TO IDENTIFY PATIENTS WHO ARE FOOD INSECURE

THE SIOUXLAND FOUNDATION, CREATED TO RAISE MONEY FOR INTEGRATED SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

A GROCERY CARD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM FOR HEALTHY FOOD VOUCHERS

THE GROW AN EXTRA ROW PROGRAM, INSPIRING LOCAL FARMERS TO GROW A LITTLE MORE FOR DONATION

PARTNERING WITH LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICE, LEGAL AID AND HOSPITAL/DENTAL PROVIDERS TO ADDRESS BROAD-RANGING NEEDS

PARTNERS

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

FOOD BANK

GROCERS

IOWA LEGAL AID

LEADERSHIP SIOUXLAND

THE LOCAL HOSPITAL

WALMART

¹The PRAPARE tool is a national standardized patient risk assessment protocol designed to engage patients in assessing and addressing social determinants of health. The tool was developed by the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, the Oregon Primary Care Association and the Institute for Alternative Futures. For more information, visit www.nachc.org/prapare.