



FOOD IS MEDICINE™
— COALITION —

9.19.22

[/ Events](#)

Food Is Medicine Coalition Hosts Virtual National Symposium

New York, NY and Virtual (September 19) – The [Food Is Medicine Coalition \(FIMC\)](#), an association of nonprofit, medically tailored food and nutrition services (FNS) providers from across the country, hosted a three-day virtual symposium to share best practices for and celebrate achievements around growing access to medically tailored meals (MTM), a low-cost high-impact solution for sick and low-income Americans. God's Love was honored to convene and participate in the FIMC Symposium with our peer organizations.

The culmination of the year-long staff development program for medically tailored food and nutrition services agencies across the country, the Symposium included sessions where nearly 400 participants discussed best practices in medically tailored nutrition, research in the field, and healthcare innovations projects from across the country. In order to continue to educate and elevate the capacity of the Coalition's organizations, the Symposium included tracks ranging from Policy, Healthcare Contracting, Nutrition, Operations, and Development and Fundraising. From learning how to incorporate client feedback into our program to integrating storytelling more effectively in our development model, attendees left with more information and actionable items to enhance services for clients and advocacy efforts at the local, state, and national levels.

Of particular focus this year was the coinciding leadup to the White House Conference on Health and Nutrition, which the "food is medicine" dialogue was at a forefront of the discussion for the Biden-Harris Administration.

Day one of the Symposium reviewed all that FIMC has accomplished this year, providing an opportunity for attendees to meet with their colleagues from across the country. After the opening ceremony, programs on DEIA work and wellness practices were given. A highlight of the first day was the Main Stage Spotlight: Gestational Diabetes Roundtable. Many FIMC agencies such as God's Love have created new programs for maternal health or people living with gestational diabetes. Moderator Dr. Emma Steinberg, Pediatric Hospitalist, Chef, Pediatric Culinary Medicine Champion, led FIMC panelists from Ceres Community Project, Food & Friends, God's Love We Deliver, Project Angel Heart and Open Hand Atlanta through a discussion on Nutrition, Staff Training, Policy, Funding and Evaluation.

Highlights from the second day of the Symposium included a mainstage spotlight "Antiracism Equity Framework: Designing Equitable and Inclusive Systems" with Artrese Morrison, a former leader at Project Open Hand in San Francisco who is now at Health Leads. Bringing her extensive background in MTM services delivery into a new context to present the landscape of system design types, including those that center on anti-racist practices, Morrison discussed strategic visioning to reflect on the institutional practices that do harm and transform them into anti-racist solutions. Another highlighted address was a nutrition track spotlight session: "Equity in Food Practices." Laura Strait, MS, RD, LD, discussed the project and how this work translates across other FIMC agencies; particularly, including the voices of these


communities and sourcing recipes from folks with lived experience in these groups.

The Symposium's final day covered current and ongoing FIMC projects included the Accelerator, FIMC membership and accreditation, and the new strategic plan, all followed by more track-based sessions, concluding with remarks by Congressional champion and longtime supporter Jim McGovern (MA), member of the Bipartisan Food Is Medicine Working Group. Chairman McGovern spoke about the importance of MTMs and FIMC programs and our advocacy in addressing food insecurity and access to nutrition and MTMs in our most vulnerable communities, sharing his excitement for future legislative efforts that would align with our mission. A long-time food is medicine and anti-hunger advocate, he and his colleagues in the Food Is Medicine Working Group of the House Hunger Caucus authored [H.R. 5370: The Medically Tailored Home-delivered Meal Demonstration Pilot Act of 2021](#). Chairman McGovern's keynote address was followed with a dinner and cooking demonstration with bestselling cookbook author, food writer, and God's Love Culinary Council member, Julia Turshen.


The Coalition speaks for the growing body of scientific [research](#) that shows chronically ill patients who receive FNS-based care experience better health outcomes. These studies have also found medically tailored nutrition is an inexpensive solution that significantly reduces healthcare costs for the sickest among us. Saving one night in the hospital, can feed an ill individual medically tailored meals for six months. The FIMC National Symposium underscores the power of this commonsense, non-pharma-based treatment.

In sum, the Symposium is a way to unite the advocacy goals of food and nutrition service providers from all over the country, to share new and emerging research on food as medicine, to energize and learn.

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10.9.24 / Volunteer

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