

# Research: Why Medically Tailored Meals Work

God's Love was founded on the simple realization that people who are very sick don't just need food, but individually tailored meals that consider the many challenges facing someone with a serious illness. Research from across the country has proven that this act of tailoring each meal to meet a client's specific medical diagnosis works. In fact, it not only improves a client's health outcomes, but also improves medication adherence, and keeps clients out of the hospital and in their homes.

The research we describe below has been completed by God's Love and peer medically tailored meal agencies across the country.

## Completed Research

God's Love We Deliver

### **Community Health Advisory & Information Network (C.H.A.I.N.) Study**

The policy team at God's Love We Deliver teamed up with Dr. Angela Aidala at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health to analyze food-related questions in a longitudinal study of people living with HIV.

Read the fact sheets below.

Project Angel Heart - Denver

### **Small Intervention, Big Impact: Health Care Cost Reductions Related to Medically Tailored Nutrition**

Using medical claims data from the Colorado All Payer Claims Database, Project Angel Heart conducted a research study to examine the health care costs of Project Angel Heart clients before, during, and after they received meal deliveries. They learned that medically tailored meals led to a 13% decrease in the rate of hospital readmissions, total medical costs for people with CHF, COPD, and diabetes decreased by 24% and clients spent less on hospital stays while receiving meals.

Community Servings - Boston

### **Meal Delivery Programs Reduce The Use Of Costly Health Care In Dually Eligible Medicare And Medicaid Beneficiaries**

Researchers found that Community Servings clients had fewer inpatient admissions – resulting in a 16% net reduction in healthcare costs. In dollar terms, the average monthly medical costs for medically tailored meals participants was \$843, compared to \$1,413 for the control group, reflecting gross savings of \$570 per month, or net savings (factoring in the cost of the meals) of \$220 per month. The study suggests that medically tailored home-delivered meals are a cost-effective approach to managing the health of individuals with complex medical and social needs.

Project Open Hand - San Francisco

### **Comprehensive and Medically Appropriate Food Support Is Associated with Improved HIV and Diabetes Health**

Project Open Hand partnered with UCSF to launch a pilot program to study and evaluate the intervention in Type 2 Diabetes, HIV and co-morbidly diagnosed populations. The completion of this study provides scientific data to demonstrate that Project Open Hand's food does indeed equal medicine for diabetes and HIV clients. This partnership has been expanded and is in the second phase of implementation. New research results are forthcoming.

Key Results: 63% reduction in hospitalizations, 50% increase in medication adherence and 58% decrease in client emergency room visits.

MANNA - Philadelphia

## **Examining Health Care Costs Among MANNA Clients and a Comparison Group**

This study explored health care claims data on 65 MANNA clients over time in comparison with a matched set of Medicaid patients who did not receive MANNA services. This peer-reviewed research found. MANNA clients were hospitalized half as often, and, if they were hospitalized, the stay was 37% shorter and they were 23% more likely to be discharged to their home rather than sub-acute care. The cost savings among those who were hospitalized was dramatic with an average 28% cost savings for the MANNA client group.

## **Forthcoming Research**

God's Love We Deliver and NYU Langone Medical Center

### **“Food as medicine: A randomized controlled trial of home delivered, medically tailored meals (MTHDM) on quality of life in metastatic lung and non-colorectal GI cancer patients.”**

This study, the first randomized-controlled trial of medically tailored meals as a healthcare intervention, is evaluating standard of care vs. standard of care plus medically tailored meals in metastatic lung and non-colorectal GI cancers with a primary aim of comparing quality of life using the fact-G questionnaire.