

Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network

Facilitated by the Minneapolis Health Department

Thursday, January 16, 2014

10:00 – 11:30am

**Location: Community Emergency Service (CES)
1900 11th Ave S, Minneapolis**



**EVERYBODY NEEDS
HEALTHY FOOD**

Participants

- Jacob Schuster (CES)
- Rachel Henderson (Waite House)
- Pa lee Yang (CAPI)
- Laura Skubic (EFN)
- Bunmi Adekunle (Good Works)
- Karen DeClouet (CES)
- Marci Van Hazinga (City of Minneapolis CPED)
- Jessica Hering (Salvation Army NEED)
- Kristen Klingler (Minneapolis Health Department)

Meeting Notes

Spotlight on CES Food Shelf

Information was presented on the food shelf's current operations:

- CES food shelf had more than 67,000 client contacts in 2012 and distributed 464,000 pounds of food. They primarily serve south Minneapolis residents every day, Monday through Thursday (about 20-35 people on average). On Fridays, CES hosts a food giveaway (fresh produce and other food items) that serves approximately 300-500 clients and is open to anyone. On Thursdays, they distribute Somali food boxes sourced from EFN. They hope to bring a Somali staff person on board soon to assist with outreach efforts to this cultural community. The food shelf also has a Thanksgiving and Christmas distribution.
- CES also works to deliver free groceries from the CES food shelf to homebound clients through a home delivery service.
- CES also serves as an EFN Fare For All site and offers Meals on Wheels delivery. In addition, staff provide services related to rent and utility bill payments, transportation, and crisis situations.

Updates/Announcements

- **Minneapolis Healthy Food Shelf Network** – **Please see list of 2014 meeting dates, times, and locations attached to email.**
- **Minneapolis Health Department's Healthy Meals Program:** The Minneapolis Health Department (MHD) received funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to assist emergency meal programs in their efforts to increase access to healthy food options for low-income individuals and families in need. MHD will help meal programs identify opportunities to increase the amount, variety, and quality of healthy foods purchased, donated, and prepared for program recipients. MHD will also provide assistance to partners interested in adopting healthy food policies and practices to expand their capacity to offer healthy foods.

There may be one or two joint meetings between food shelves and meal program partners over the course of the two-year grant, but most activities will be done in a separate but parallel manner. **For more information or to suggest an emergency meal program partner for the project, please email Kristen.Klingler@minneapolismn.gov**

- **EFN/Second Harvest/U of MN F.O.O.D survey** – EFN, Second Harvest Heartland, and the University of MN are partnering on a study that will test the effectiveness of using the Healthy Eating Index (HEI) as a feedback tool about the healthfulness of the food received from the two food banks. Partner food shelves will receive a survey via email; the University of MN will analyze food shelf responses to and provide each food shelf with an HEI score on their ordering history from both Second Harvest and EFN.

Healthy Food Shelf Network 2014 action plan and values

- The group reviewed a draft 2014 action plan (developed based on feedback from October 2013 meeting) – **please see updated 2014 action plan attached to email.**
- Comments on the 2014 action plan included:
 - Food shelves would find it very helpful if MHD could create a healthy food training toolkit to use with staff and volunteers who interact directly with clients. If staff and volunteers can be trained on healthy food options, the importance of healthy eating and healthy foods for clients, etc, they can provide better education and customer service to clients. Many food shelves celebrate Volunteer Appreciate Month in April, which might be a good time to give this type of training. Alternatively, as new volunteers are brought on, their orientation could include a healthy food training. **MHD staff will work to develop a training toolkit prior to April.**
 - Promoting healthy food options through signage and marketing materials will be very helpful to food shelves. Materials should focus on images/pictures with bright colors and minimal text (or text translated into non-English languages). **MHD will work to modify/produce marketing materials for all interested food shelves and perform enhancements to highlight healthy food options in food shelves during 2014.**
 - **Food shelves would find it helpful to have a food shelf directory with contact information, hours of operation, etc in order to facilitate client referrals and sharing of resources. MHD will put together a directory before the March Network meeting and will also update the existing Healthy Food Outlets map which indicates where farmers markets, community gardens, and CSA drop-off sites are located in relation to food shelves.**
- The group also discussed a series of questions designed to help shape common values and principles related to the Network's commitment to procure and distribute healthy food options. Responses to each question are included below:
- *How would you describe the Network's "Passion, Promise, and Principles (what we care about, what we are committed to, and how we do our work)?"*
 - Healthy food is a human right
 - We have a responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to healthy foods
 - Health disparities, high rates of illness are found primarily in populations that rely on food shelves
 - Food is a key component to health and community vitality

- Physical health is connected to social wellbeing and mental health – food shelf practices can impact these things significantly
 - Health & chronic health problems are a limiting factor – people are entitled to a high quality of life
 - We value/commit to working together to develop healthy, livable communities where everyone has access to healthy foods
- *In the food shelf community, different opinions exist about whether or not food shelves should distribute products with low nutritional value, such as soda and candy. What are some opinions you have heard? What do you think?*
 - Common pushback from donors and volunteers - “Everybody deserves a treat”
 - Depends on source/donor instructions (who is making the choice) – how people perceive what is purchased
 - OK to distribute in limited quantities
 - Some food shelves might be giving people their only sources of some foods (like baked goods/treats)
 - Retail food rescue is heavy on unhealthy treats/bakery items – communications to donors is hard – food shelves can’t be picky without risking hurting the donor relationship
 - Tension: food shelves policing food choices vs. responsibility to protect health of participants
 - Concern about how to handle food waste when things are donated that food shelf doesn’t want to distribute
 - Tension between hunger (calories) and health (nutritious options)
 - Food shelves need to treat clients with dignity, give them choices, provide education
 - Clients dealing with addiction/recovery often crave sweets
- *As an entity that provides food to supplement what individuals are able to buy in the grocery store, what foods do you feel are most important for your clients?*
 - Fresh fruits & veggies
 - Culturally familiar foods (the foods they want to eat)
 - Foods that are harder for low-income people to buy on their own
 - Foods that people know how to prepare/cook/eat
 - “Feel good” foods that still contribute to health
 - Whole foods that help build health – staple foods; healthy fats, carbs, etc.
- *What role do you think food shelves have in providing nutritious food to clients in the community?*
 - Responsibility to provide access to nutritious foods
 - Lead by example through policies & practices
 - Responsibility to encourage clients to eat healthy by the foods that are offered
 - Food shelves can make healthy foods interesting and show clients what is possible
 - Educating community (participants, donors) on the connection between food & health – e.g. consequences/impacts of sugar-sweetened beverages & healthy alternatives

Healthy Food Policies

- MHD, EFN, Bloomington Public Health, and Phillips Healthy Living Initiative are co-hosting a “Healthy Food Policy” workshop on Thursday, March 6th from 8:30 – 11:30am (optional breakfast/networking from 8:30-9am). The workshop will be held at Waite House (2323 11th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN).
- Food shelf managers and agency leaders who are ready/almost ready to take action on developing a healthy food policy are invited to attend to receive hands-on technical assistance in developing a timeline, action plan, and policy outline.
- A formal invitation will be sent out to all food shelf partners before the end of January and will include additional details and information on how to RSVP.