



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

LifeSpan Resources introduce new program, “Produce for Better Health.”

New Program Provides Free Fresh Produce to older adults aged 60 + and individuals with disabilities!

A new program, offered through LifeSpan Resources, ***Produce for Better Health*** (PBH) provides bi-weekly boxes of fresh produce to the agency’s congregate participants (senior lunch program). The project is being offered statewide through Indiana’s 15 Area Agencies on Aging. It is funded by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and facilitated by the Indiana Association of Area Agencies’ (IAAAA) Education Institute.

The program is a quality improvement project that aims to alleviate senior hunger and provide more servings of fresh fruits and vegetables. Participants will track several health statistics including weight and blood pressure to determine the health outcomes of adding more fresh produce to the diet. These outcomes will be studied by the Indiana University Center for Aging Research (IUCAR).

Each participant receives a box of packaged fresh produce such as broccoli, baby carrots, cucumbers, cantaloupe, tomatoes, lettuce and more - plus tips on preparing the produce and recipes -every other week. The boxes are picked up to take home from the congregate site. The box provides two extra 4 oz. servings of fresh produce per day.

Research in the area of “food as medicine” has revealed that half of Indiana seniors have trouble eating healthy – which could be due to food insecurity, lack of income, living in a food desert, or lack of transportation to groceries and markets, which causes increased risk of chronic diseases and reduced quality-of-life.

“Access to nutritious food is a key social determinant of health that impacts quality health outcomes,” said Kristen LaEace, CEO of IAAAA. “We appreciate the importance the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation is placing on health equity with this investment. Another promising aspect is our partnership with IUCAR and the participants themselves, which will allow us to measure the impact of this investment over time on participants’ health, including malnutrition risk, weight, blood pressure and the ability to remain in their own homes.”

To be eligible for this program, you must first be a registered participant at one of LifeSpan Resources' congregate centers. For more information, please contact Ramona Miller, Director of Nutrition and Transportation at rmiller@lsr14.org or 812-206-7936.

Photos and captions, below.



Ramona Miller presents the Produce for Better Health program at the Yellowwood Terrace congregate center in February.



Masterson's Catering is providing the bi-weekly boxes of packaged fresh produce items. Boxes will be delivered to the congregate centers for participants to pick up.