



Initiative to Fight Hunger in Camden, NJ



Vittorio Terrigno M.D., Daniel A. Ricketti M.D., Joshua Weinstock M.D., Elizabeth Cerceo M.D.
For the Cooper University Hospital Department of Graduate Medical Education

Introduction:

Access to food continues to be a problem for the City of Camden.

Under/Unemployment: Feeding America estimates that 46% of the households it serves did not have at least one member of that household who was employed. The residents of Camden, NJ are no different and have difficulty affording their living expenses including food.

Community Need Assessment:

Homelessness: The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimated in 2018 that there were at least 550,000 homeless people in the United States on any given night. Although difficult to truly measure in January 2019 there were at least 482 homeless individuals in Camden County.

There are a number of organizations in the city of Camden, such as Cathedral Kitchen, that offer free meals to those in need. Cathedral Kitchen offers to-go meals to help lessen the burden and time it takes to have to travel for food daily.

Problem Statement:

Residents of Camden, NJ have inadequate and unreliable access to food. This not only negatively affects their health, but also affects their life both socially and economically.



Goals and Objectives:

Primary Goal: To lessen social and economic burdens on local impoverished residents by working in conjunction with Cathedral Kitchen to produce and provide them with meals.
Secondary Goal: To promote resident wellness by providing all of our Residents at Cooper University Hospital with an opportunity to socialize and relax while simultaneously engaging in altruistic activity.

Results and Future Directions:

Cooper University Hospital has helped to make and distribute more than 200 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Over 20 residents and employees participated in our initial noontime event. In the future we aim to produce and provide an average of more than 100 sandwiches per month over the course of the next year to be provided to those in need.

Sources

-O'Dea, Colleen. "NJ's Homeless Population Decreases, But Nine Counties See an Increase." *NJ Spotlight*, 7 Oct. 2019, www.njspotlight.com/2019/07/19-07-30-njs-homeless-population-s-decreases-but-nine-counties-see-an-increase/.