Implementing a Process for Universal Food Insecurity Screening for Hospitalized Adults at Strong Memorial Hospital

Joseph DiTursi, MD; Richard Rambuss, MD; Elizabeth Pope-Collins, MD; Emily Gore, MS-4; Kristi Filmore, NP; Megan Puls, RN; Meghan K. Train, DO

At Strong Memorial Hospital (SMH), no standardized process exists for screening hospitalized adults for food insecurity. Our primary aim is to develop and implement a collaborative, sustainable process to screen all hospitalized adults at SMH for food insecurity. In partnership with the Health Equity and Antiracism Technology Program, a process to screen patients was designed and piloted on one medical unit. Prior to the implementation of our screening process, there was no standard approach to universal food insecurity screening. Baseline data showed that over a one-month period, only one patient (of an average of 114 patient encounters per month), was identified as food insecure. During process implementation, several appointed nurse champions assisted in nursing staff education on the screening workflow and provided interactive simulations of potential patient interactions. Daily education to nursing staff was provided during unit safety huddles for two weeks. Future goals include expansion of this food insecurity screening process to other SMH units and follow-up with patients who were connected with resources to evaluate whether the resources had been utilized.