



Statement of Casey Dyson, Government Relations and Public Funding Director, Food & Friends
Budget support testimony
April 5, 2024

Councilmembers - I'd like to thank you for your continued support of our mission to improve the lives and health of Montgomery County residents who are living with serious illnesses such as cancer, kidney failure, HIV/AIDS, and are too sick to shop or cook for themselves. Your fiscal support, as well as the time you've spent volunteering with us, shows your commitment to the physical and mental health of your neighbors.

We support the FY25 budget funding of the Senior Nutrition Program, the funding of the Housing and Community Affairs grants management of the Community Development Block Grant, the funding for the Office of Food System Resilience (particularly the Food is Medicine efforts), and the Office of Grants Management. We also request that the county grants process expand eligibility to allow non-profits without a physical footprint in the county to be eligible to apply for all grants.

For the past 36 years, Food & Friends has been home-delivering freshly prepared medically tailored meals, medically tailored groceries and medical nutrition therapy to individuals living with serious illnesses. Our clients are referred to us from their healthcare providers, and there is no charge for services. Families and caregivers also can receive meals free of charge. Last year we delivered almost 1.9 million meals and over 2,200 nutrition encounters to more than 5,500 neighbors across Maryland, the District and Virginia. Of those, 202,923 meals were home delivered to 617 Montgomery County clients and their dependents (15 of those clients are Veterans).

Because we are the only community-based organization in our region doing this work, we serve a lifesaving need that no one else does. Our clients are acutely ill and therefore are often unable to take advantage of other nutrition support programs or shop at a grocery store. Sixty-five percent of our clients report income of less than \$1,500/mo., further adding stress to their lives. We deliver hope, one meal at a time.

Food & Friends relies on philanthropy and health care partnerships in addition to public funds from federal, state, and local sources. We're committed to maintaining a diverse revenue stream and the support from the Montgomery County Council is a key part of our ability to carry out our work. For each dollar we receive from Montgomery County, we must raise almost \$7 from other sources. We are a good investment.

In addition to being good stewards of your money, we also reduce the cost of healthcare. Participation in a medically tailored meal program is associated with improved mental health, fewer hospital and nursing home admissions, and lower overall medical spending. Those living with complex health condition who receive medically tailored meals and medical nutrition therapy experience **50% fewer inpatient admissions and 70% fewer emergency department visits** than those not enrolled in such a program. A recent Tufts study estimates that if all US eligible patients received access to meals with nutrition standards such as ours, in just the first year over 1.5 million hospitalizations could be avoided for a net **cost savings of \$13.6 billion.**ⁱ Our service makes a difference.

Outcomes from a recent pilot project:



Maryland Pilot

Food & Friends partnered with Maryland Physicians Care in 2020/2021 to conduct a ten-month pilot to deliver medically tailored meals to 43 diabetic members. 18 medically tailored meals per week were delivered to each member for three months.

A pre-/post six-month cohort analysis was conducted by Maryland Physicians Care at the end of the pilot. A control group of forty similar diabetic Maryland Physician Care members who did not receive medically tailored meals was compared.

Results showed members who received medically tailored meals had a decrease in emergency department visits and a net savings of approximately \$8,000 per member post six months. Below are the results.

	#	PriorMedRxExp	PostMedRxExp	Difference	Per member
Enrolled with F&F	43	888,461.48	749,425.61	(139,035.87)	(3,233.39)
Not Enrolled with F&F	40	\$ 653,837.67	\$ 844,130.45	190,292.78	4,757.32

We appreciate the Council’s support of our mission and look forward to additional shared public-private efforts to meet the needs of the nutritionally vulnerable in Montgomery County.

Thank you.

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¹ Hager K, Cudhea FP, Wong JB, et al. Association of National Expansion of Insurance Coverage of Medically Tailored Meals With Estimated Hospitalizations and Health Care Expenditures in the US. JAMA Netw Open. 2022;5(10):e2236898. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.36898



our work in montgomery county

WHO WE ARE

Since 1988, we are the only community-based organization in the D.C. region providing home-delivered Medically Tailored Meals and Medical Nutrition Therapy to our neighbors living with serious illnesses that limit their ability to provide nourishment for themselves.

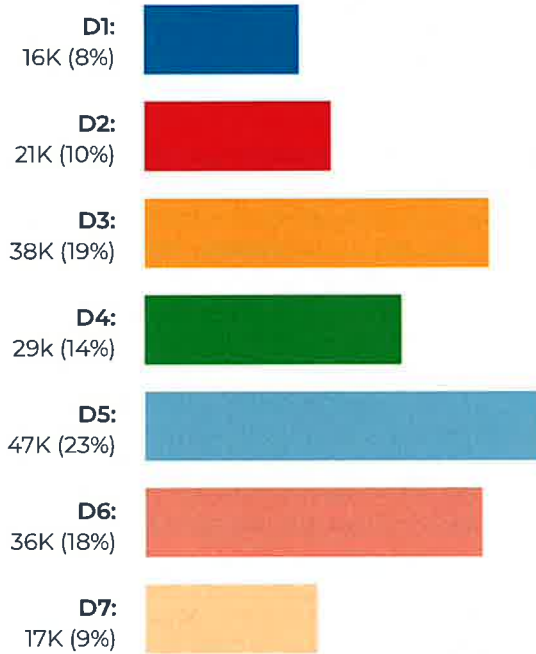
WHAT WE DO

With the help of thousands of volunteers, Food & Friends prepares and delivers nutritionally tailored, delicious meals directly to our neighbors' homes. Our Registered Dietitians and professional chefs work closely to provide individualized services to our clients.

WHO WE SERVE

Food & Friends provides Medically Tailored Meals, groceries, and Medical Nutrition Therapy to people living with life-challenging illnesses. All meals and services are free-of-charge to the client. Recognizing that clients with children often share their food with their kids, Food & Friends also provides services to dependents and caregivers in the household, ensuring the parent can focus on getting well.

TOTAL MEALS DELIVERED



Food & Friends is built on a simple premise: anyone can get sick, and everyone can help.

In FY22, Food & Friends home-delivered over 202,923 Medically Tailored Meals to 419 primary clients in Montgomery county. In 2023, our clients had a range of illnesses including cancer, diabetes, renal disease, HIV/AIDS, maternal health concerns, heart disease and other serious illnesses.



202,923
meals delivered
to Montgomery
County each year



617
total clients
live in
Montgomery
County



249
nutrition encounters
with our registered
dietitians



344
volunteers live
in Montgomery
County



76%
of all households
served have income
less than \$1500/month

CONNECT



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FY23 - MoCo Stats

Fiscal Year
■ FY23

Total Meals by MoCo Districts

District	Total Meals	%
District-1	15,533	8%
District-2	20,542	10%
District-3	37,937	19%
District-4	28,780	14%
District-5	46,784	23%
District-6	36,065	18%
District-7	17,282	9%
Total	202,923	100%



Total Meals:

202,923

Total Clients:

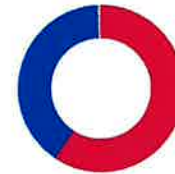
617

Primary Clients:

419

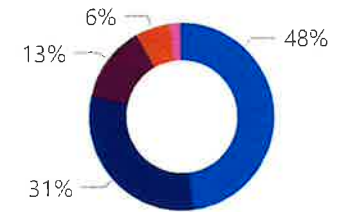
Primary Clients Stats by Gender

Gender	Total Clients	%
Female	249	59%
Male	168	40%
Transgender	1	0%
Unk/Refused	1	0%
Total	419	100%



Primary Clients Stats by Age Groups

Age groups	Total Clients	%
0-17	9	2%
18-35	25	6%
36-49	55	13%
50-64	129	31%
65+	201	48%
Total	419	100%



Total Clients by MoCo Districts

District	Total Clients	%
District-1	47	8%
District-2	65	11%
District-3	115	19%
District-4	92	15%
District-5	140	23%
District-6	110	18%
District-7	51	8%
Total	617	100%



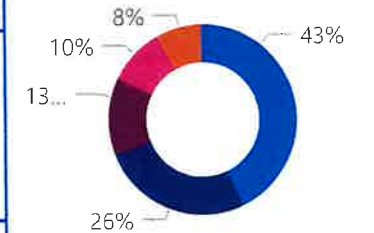
Primary Clients Stats by Race & Ethnicity

Race	Total Clients	%
Black	146	35%
Latino/a/x	97	23%
White	92	22%
Unk/Refused	53	13%
Asian	29	7%
Other	2	0%
Total	419	100%



All Clients Stats by Age Groups

Age groups	All Clients	%
0-17	61	10%
18-35	49	8%
36-49	82	13%
50-64	160	26%
65+	265	43%
Total	617	100%



Primary Clients by MoCo Districts

District	Primary Clients	%
District-1	32	8%
District-2	44	11%
District-3	74	18%
District-4	68	16%
District-5	91	22%
District-6	80	19%
District-7	33	8%
Total	419	100%



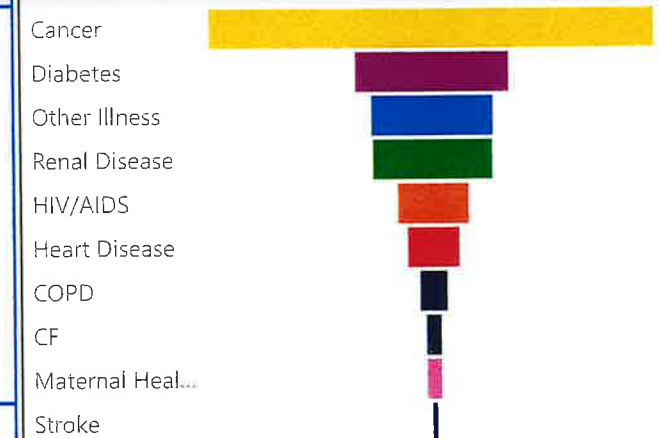
Total Meals Served by Illness Type Groups

Illness Type	Total Meals	%
Cancer	92,112	45%
Other Illness	26,376	13%
Diabetes	24,932	12%
Renal Disease	22,200	11%
HIV/AIDS	18,373	9%
Heart Disease	9,986	5%
COPD	3,612	2%
CF	3,136	2%
Maternal Health	1,530	1%
Stroke	666	0%
Total	202,923	100%

Primary Clients Stats by Illness Type Groups

Illness Type	Total Clients	%
Cancer	182	43%
Diabetes	63	15%
Other Illness	50	12%
Renal Disease	49	12%
HIV/AIDS	29	7%
Heart Disease	21	5%
COPD	11	3%
CF	6	1%
Maternal Health	6	1%
Stroke	2	0%
Total	419	100%

Total Primary Clients:



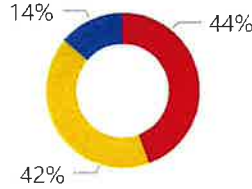


FY23 Stats - Meals

Fiscal Year
■ FY23

Total Meals by State

State	Total Meals	PCT
DC	841,736	44%
MD	791,283	42%
VA	259,485	14%
Total	1,892,504	100%

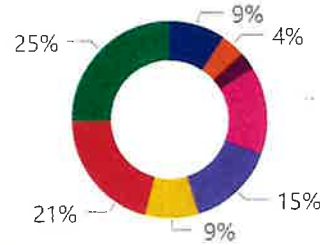


Total Meals Served:

1,892,504

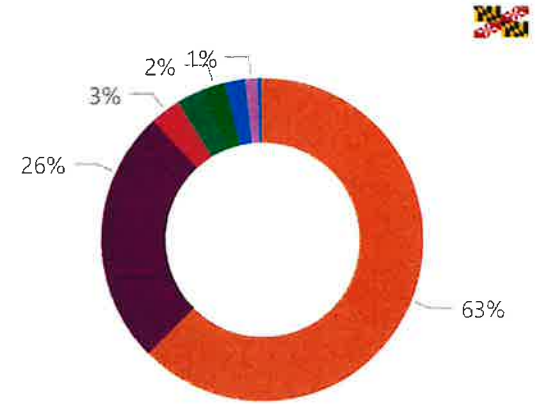
Total DC Meals by Ward

Ward	Total Meals	PCT
1	78,411	9%
2	35,038	4%
3	24,428	3%
4	120,748	14%
5	122,462	15%
6	74,802	9%
7	174,411	21%
8	211,436	25%
Total	841,736	100%



Total MD Meals by County

County	Total Meals	PCT
Prince Georges	495,682	63%
Montgomery	202,923	26%
Washington	24,028	3%
Charles	22,447	3%
Allegany	17,538	2%
Frederick	15,686	2%
Saint Marys	9,807	1%
Calvert	2,290	0%
Garrett	882	0%
Total	791,283	100%



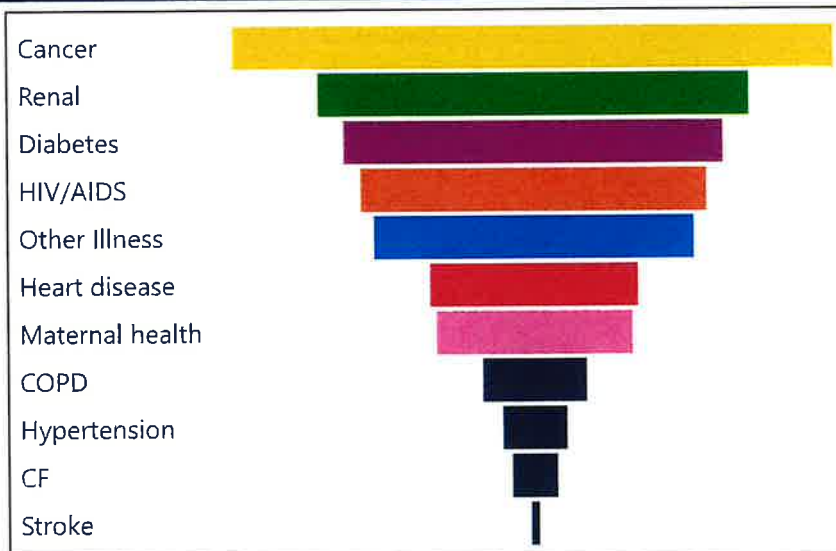
Total Meals by Program

PROG	Total Meals	PCT
HDM	947,159	50%
GTG	945,344	50%
Total	1,892,504	100%



Total Meals by Illness Type Groups

Illness	Total Meals	PCT
Cancer	421,712	22%
Renal	302,051	16%
Diabetes	265,901	14%
HIV/AIDS	242,525	13%
Other Illness	224,077	12%
Heart disease	145,451	8%
Maternal health	137,203	7%
COPD	72,347	4%
Hypertension	44,543	2%
CF	31,421	2%
Stroke	5,273	0%
Total	1,892,504	100%



Total VA Meals by County

County	Total Meals	PCT
Fairfax	114,801	44%
Arlington	37,034	14%
Prince William	34,204	13%
Alexandria City	24,654	10%
Loudoun	12,986	5%
Manassas City	12,463	5%
Manassas Park City	8,576	3%
Stafford	4,930	2%
Fairfax City	3,381	1%
Spotsylvania	2,645	1%
Fredericksburg City	2,104	1%
Falls Church City	1,241	0%
King George	468	0%
Total	259,485	100%

