

Food Pharmacy Officially Opens at CIFIC's Danbury Community Center

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United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut Officially Opens Food Pharmacy of Greater Danbury with Nuvance Health and Connecticut Institute for Communities

Danbury, CT (November 2, 2023) —

United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut officially opens the 'Food Pharmacy of Greater Danbury', a collaborative effort with Nuvance Health,

Connecticut Institute for Communities (CIFIC), Community Action Agency of Western CT and UConn Extension. This remarkable project has come to fruition with the support of a \$1,050,000 grant through Congressionally Directed Spending, championed by U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal and Chris Murphy.



"We firmly believe that a thriving community's foundation lies in the health and well-being of its residents", said Isabel Almeida, President and CEO of United Way of Coastal and Western Connecticut. "Through collaboration with Nuvance Health, CT Institute for Communities, Community Action Agency of Western CT, UConn Extension, and numerous other community partners, the Food Pharmacy of Greater Danbury will play a crucial role in addressing the underlying factors that impact the health of our community members."

"Access to healthy and nutritious food should not be a privileged reserve for some, it should be a right shared equitably among all people", said Dr. Brenda Ayers of Nuvance Health. "Today, with the Food as Medicine program and the Food Pharmacy of Greater Danbury, we have the opportunity to provide equitable access to those most vulnerable and most in need. This is the vision realized and the mission not complete, but definitely under way. I am truly honored and humbled to be part of this fantastic work."

Food pharmacies are community-based sites designed to increase access to and consumption of healthful foods, particularly fruits and vegetables, for those individuals diagnosed with obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and/or hypertension. The Food Pharmacy will be a grocery-style food pantry co-located with the Connecticut Institute for Communities' Community Center

("CIFIC") in downtown Danbury. Physicians and health care providers will "prescribe" healthy foods over a nine-month period for 100 patients who are screened as food insecure and identified as experiencing hypertension.

"We are thrilled to see the vision of the United Way and Nuvance come to life as the Food Farmacy of Greater Danbury, and we are thankful for the hard work of our CIFIC staff in building out the space and in helping to craft the patient referral process", expressed Katie McKeon Curran, President and CEO of Connecticut Institute For Communities, Inc (CIFIC). "CIFIC is honored to have the Food Farmacy located in our Danbury Community Center, and we look forward to continued partnerships and collaborations in Danbury and the region to create impactful and innovative benefits for area residents."

Identified individuals will be given a prescription that can be "filled" at the Food Farmacy twice a month and complemented by accessing additional fresh produce benefits through United Way's Produce Benefits program, which includes weekly funding for participants to use on fresh produce at participating retailers. Participants will have access to a monthly consultations with a dietitian, regular healthy meal preparation classes, as well as support from a community impact worker, who will link them with other wrap-around social service supports. UConn Extension educators will offer clients monthly healthy cooking and nutrition education courses to be paired with cooking equipment starter kits to encourage healthy eating at home. A dedicated physician and data analyst will monitor program impacts on patient outcomes. This integrated approach not only addresses a patient's nutritional needs but also helps to identify other social or structural determinants of health impacting the patient's overall well-being.

"I am thrilled to cut the ribbon on the new Food Farmacy at the Danbury Community Center", said Mayor Esposito. "I want to thank Nuvance Health, United Way, and CIFIC for coming together to provide this incredible resource for our community."

To learn more about the Food Farmacy initiative, visit www.unitedwaycwc.org/food-farmacy.

Farmacy Fotos









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