

Place-Based Diabetes Grantee

Garrett County Health Department Year One Report

Our mission is to create a coordinated system of care that unites partners to impact the food system, reduces food insecurity, improves nutrition security, and fosters a community of collaboration where deeper connections lead to greater well-being.



Introduction

Bridging Gaps in Appalachia

Bold vision, collaborative design, and a dignity-first service model make this competitive grant award one of the most ambitious systems transformations we've undertaken. CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is making a significant investment in Garrett County toward a systems change, beginning with transforming the way we approach food and nutrition security, thanks to a \$350,000 competitive grant awarded to the Population Health, Innovation, and Informatics Unit within the Garrett County Health Department.



Introduction (Cont.)

United in Purpose

This funding award helped us champion a vision and develop partnerships with Garrett County Community Action Committee, Inc. and Maryland Physicians Care to establish the 360 Access Hub. Read more about the origin here: GarrettCountyFoodBank.com.

One of the grant deliverables outlined in the 2024 application was to establish a robust food pantry/bank in Garrett County by 2027. It's rather unusual for a grant deliverable to be accomplished two years in advance! It's a testament to the community's need, partner synergy, and volunteer support. It is encouraging to know that opening the 360 Access Hub is just the beginning of this systems change.



Participatory Research Methods

Created By Community

This grant, Bridging Appalachian Systems Equability (BASE), centers around fostering partnerships and establishing physical infrastructure to fuse a fragmented food system. Our charge is to reinvent the role of a food pantry/bank and adopt a new approach that promotes health and creates pathways for people to connect with services that empower them to thrive. Maisha Douyon Cover, Program Officer for Public Health and Community Impact, has been a champion for trust building across Garrett County food systems.



Participatory Research Methods (Cont.)

Created By Community

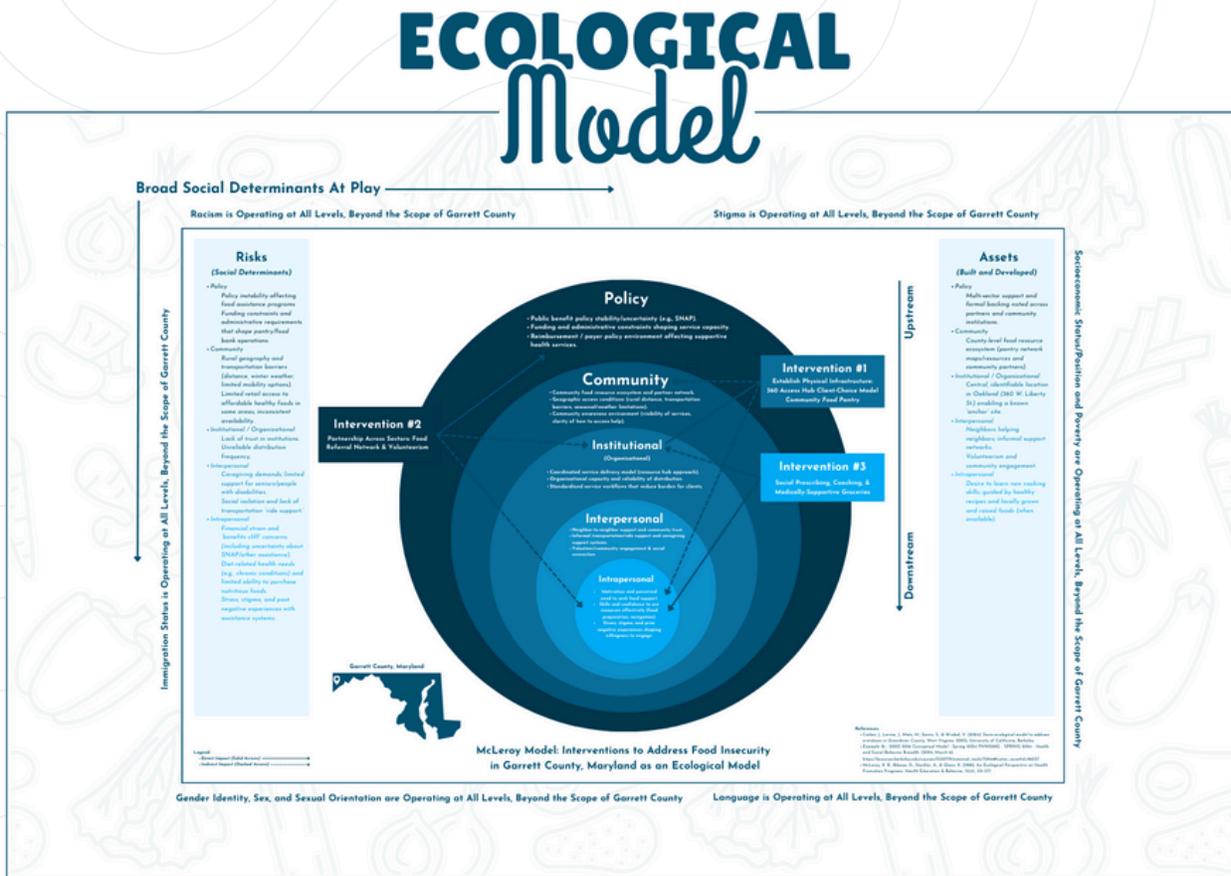
When decisions are made at the local level through community-defined practices fewer people get left out. Our aim is to deliver culturally sensitive experiences to guests who have unmet needs. Operations at the 360 Access Hub are informed by the population as they discover what works best for them. We hosted an open house in the space prior to renovations so people could help us create a collective vision. Guidance from agencies and other support organizations, along with evidence-based practices, is balanced with funding requirements, process measures, and staffing in mind to continue to deliver the best possible experience for our guests.



Evidence-Based Approach

Rooted in Research

Applying a socio-ecological model to place-based rural food and nutrition access provides a clearer picture of the relationship between domains and the upstream levers needed to address food insecurity in rural populations.



Download the Full-Scale Socio-Ecological Model:

<https://360accesshub.com/ecological-model/>

Model

Community-Driven, Heart-Led

Volunteers heard the call and came in force to clean, replace, assemble, paint, stock shelves, and get the space ready to receive guests. Huge thanks to Garrett County C-Works for organizing the volunteers for several work days leading up to the Ribbon-Cutting! A special thanks to the Garrett County Local Management Board for providing close to \$10,000 dollars worth of food so we could open the doors early.



Model (Cont.)

Infrastructure & Access to Care

We opened our doors on October 31, 2025, in response to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) freeze. To meet that critical moment, the shelves were stocked with essential items. The Food Referral Network launched at <https://360accesshub.com/help> with agency partners actively participating. To date, we've received 141 help forms for comprehensive assistance. We also take walk-ins during distribution days and have served 212 unique people with recipe-based ingredients, including fresh produce to last them about two weeks.



Model (Cont.)

Infrastructure & Access to Care

Garrett County Community Action, Inc. is our contracted partner and allows us to utilize the building. They purchase a portion of the inventory required for basic operations of 360 Access Hub. To help ensure nutrition security, we've purchased additional refrigerators and freezers to upgrade the space. We anticipate this will also increase access for guests as we are able to increase inventory on hand and prepare for expansions, such as our Food-is-Medicine model in the next phase.



Model (Cont.)

Client Choice

An evidence-based and dignity-first practice, the client choice model, is embodied at 360 Access Hub under the Garrett County Health Department's direction. This model has the potential to improve nutrition and self-efficacy. When coupled with recipes, guests are empowered to make more informed choices about their nutritional security. Many have reported they enjoy leaving with everything they need to make new recipes!



Sustainability

Business Engagement

Support from our local businesses, anchor institutions, and other community organizations is essential as we plan for sustainable operations of 360 Access Hub as a community resource center. Supporters like Appalachian Farm & Food Alliance Board Member Brenda McDonnell (Owner & Operator of Brenda's Pizzeria, Ace's Run Restaurant & Pub, Trader's Coffee House, and Firewater Kitchen & Bar) are key stakeholders in moving 360 Access Hub into the next phase of operations. Discussions and generous contributions are ongoing as guests continue to be served.



Sustainability (Cont.)

Business Engagement

Each month, a food drive is held with suggested items for the a la carte section of the Access Hub. The community continues to provide generously during these drives. It gives guests an opportunity to select different brand-name items or find something new to try. This part of the shopping experience has proven to be a favorite of the guests and is a time for staff to get to know guests better, as it's a more private one-on-one trust-building time.



Sustainability

Making a Lasting Impact

Providing seeds and skills for people to grow their own food and plants offers significant benefits, including substantial cost savings, access to a wider variety of plant types, increased food security, improved physical and mental health through gardening, and enhanced environmental sustainability by supporting local biodiversity. Based on our surveys, guests enjoy the seed program and the education we provide. Many are eagerly looking forward to this upcoming growing season!



Multiplying Impact

Collaborating With Grantees

Supporting local farmers and getting fresh produce and locally-raised meats has been an integral part of 360 Access Hub's model. The Population Health, Innovation, and Informatics unit within the Garrett County Health Department has secured funding through multiple competitive grants and continue to pay local CSAs and farmers for top quality products as we work together to strengthen our food systems.



Connecting Systems

A Convener of Partners

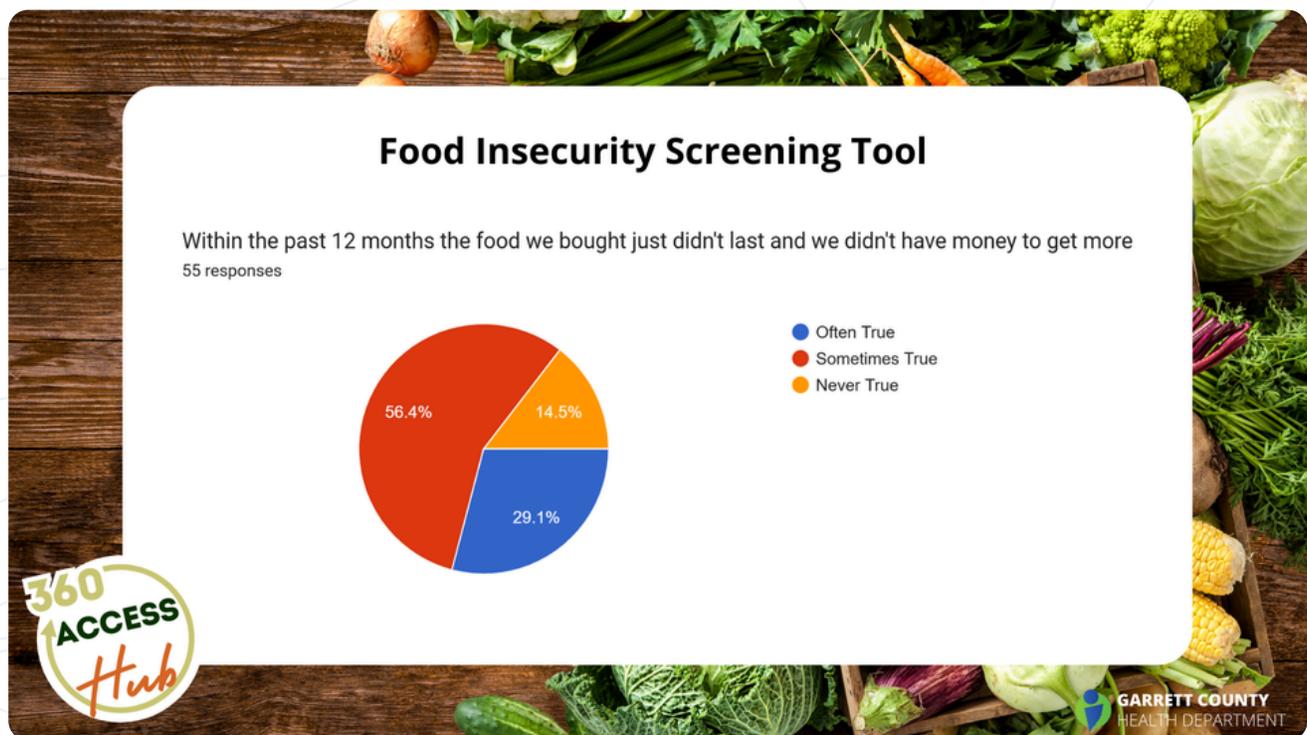
It's clear our guests are initially coming to 360 Access Hub for food and improved nutrition support. We also use this time to meet additional needs and offer resources from our partner agencies. As we work together to offer ease and convenience to help meet people where they are to build to an extensive referral network of services and support.



Connecting Systems (Cont.)

Linkages & Data

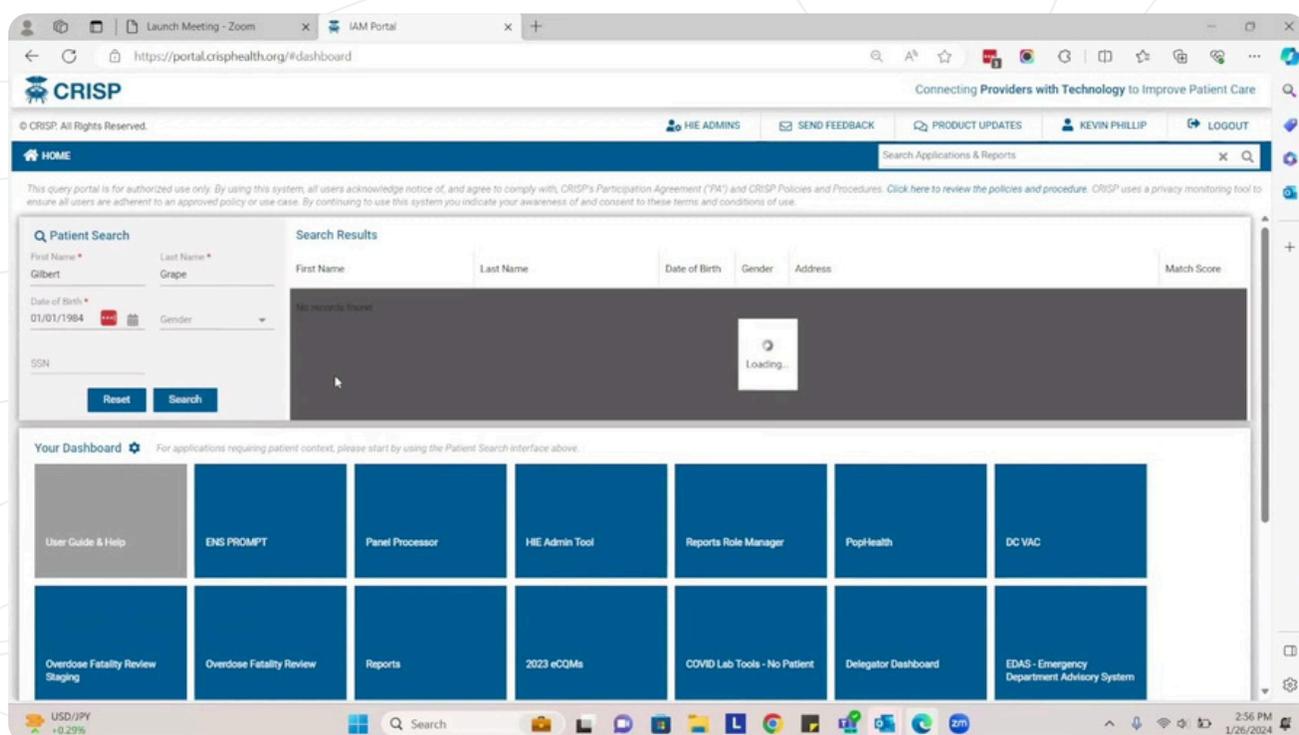
Data is a key part of decision making. We balance primary data collection through surveys and qualitative information that we gain via one-on-one interactions with guests on-site to inform the work. An evidenced-based Food Insecurity Screening Tool pictured below is an example of a sample dataset we collected from one event at 360 Access Hub.



Connecting Systems (Cont.)

CRISP & WellCheck

CRISP is the State Designated Health Information Exchange (HEI) and Health Data Utility (HUD) for Maryland. They facilitate the electronic transfer of information between disparate health information systems. The Population Health, Innovation, and Informatics Unit is working with WellCheck through another competitive grant award led by AHEC West to onboard people using CRISP's latest Social Determinants of Health Platform. Further linkages to improve local systems of care are in progress as we seek to better serve guest needs across social determinants of health.



Media

Ribbon-Cutting

A truly special event was held on Friday, October 24th, as nearly 100 people came to celebrate the ribbon-cutting of 360 Access Hub, the new community-centered space located at 360 West Liberty Street in Oakland, Maryland. Tours were given and several inspiring speeches were shared as the promise of a long-awaited and much needed service opened the doors. In addition 13 people came who needed help with food. We were poised and ready to serve our first guests.

Ribbon Cutting

360
ACCESS
Hub





**POWERED BY
COMMUNITY!**



**POWERED BY
COMMUNITY!**





**POWERED BY
COMMUNITY!**



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Media (Cont.)

Events & Healing Table

People are making 360 Access Hub their own! Ideas are turning into action and creating a space where people are welcomed and are beginning to feel a sense of belonging. Over 70 volunteer hours were logged for our fresh evergreen wreath making event that brought the joy of the season to every heart that entered. Friendships grow, a heart to serve is renewed, and community in the truest sense of the word is being created around food. We invite you to visit and experience this unique atmosphere - ***everyone is welcome at 360 Access Hub!***

CELEBRATING Community





WE ♥ OUR NEIGHBORS!



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Not medical advice, please consult your primary care provider before starting any new program.