

SNAP-Ed Toolkit

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Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative

Feeding Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Public Health Management Corporation

Overview

The Pennsylvania Healthy Pantry Initiative (PA HPI) is a PSE change intervention designed to increase access to healthy food and promote healthy food choices within the food pantry. PA HPI provides resources to implement strategies included in the pantry assessment. The strategies are divided into five categories: inventory, environment and healthy nudges, health promotion and marketing, nutrition policies and guidelines and services, resources and training. Nutrition educators collaborate with food pantry staff and volunteers, as well as food bank staff to assess, plan and implement strategies according to the needs and capacity of the pantry. **Target Behavior:** Healthy Eating **Intervention Type:** PSE Change

Intervention Reach and Adoption

PA HPI is intended to reach the food pantry audience segment. The intervention works directly with the pantry to alter the environment, increasing healthy inventory as well as using various promotion methods to encourage consumption of healthy foods. As of May 2022, 139 pantries have participated in PA HPI. **Setting:** Food pantries, Health care, USDA program sites (not National School Lunch Program), Non-governmental organizations **Target Audience:** Adults, Homeless/Food Pantry Clients **Race/Ethnicity:** All

Intervention Components

PA HPI includes four main components (phases). These intervention components include:

1. Recruit and assess pantries for participation
2. Physical/environmental changes (inventory, layout, equipment, marketing determined by the pantry assessment)
3. Nutrition education (materials available in pantry continuously)
4. Ongoing Technical assistance (including re-assessing pantries at 6-month intervals), training and nutrition education

These components aim to select and equip pantries to successfully implement intervention objectives. The assessment serves as a starting point and guides the planning and implementation process. Physical changes need to be the easiest to implement and often the most noticeable, which makes them a good place to start

implementation. The timeline for implementation varies from pantry to pantry and is dependent on the capacity of the pantry. To ensure fidelity there is a pantry visit guide, plan agreement that is completed after pantry assessments, nutrition educator activity tracker, and quarterly reports.

Intervention Materials

Intervention materials include pantry recruitment materials (letter and marketing flier), a food pantry assessment tool, pantry planning tool and partner toolkit, and resources to implement several PA HPI strategies. These materials are available at www.feedingpa.org/hpi, or by emailing the developers directly.

Intervention Costs

Intervention materials are available at no cost. All materials are available to download directly from the website, www.feedingpa.org/hpi, or upon email request.

Evidence Summary

A task force made up of staff from all the Feeding PA member food banks supported program development. An intercept survey was conducted in 5 pantries with 172 pantry clients to guide program planning and initial implementation. Qualitative data were collected from pantry coordinators, this included pantry coordinator surveys and interviews which assessed outcomes of participating in PA HPI, ease of implementing various strategies, usefulness of available materials and pantry client input. As a result of participating in PA HPI many of the pantry coordinators reported greater access to food storage and equipment, more access to healthy food and more nutrition education resources. A pantry assessment evaluates pantries in five categories: inventory, environment and healthy nudges, health promotion and marketing, nutrition policies and guidelines, and services, resources and training. Participating pantries on average showed improvement in their overall pantry assessment scores **Evidenced-Based Approach: Practice-Tested**

Evaluation Indicators

Based on the SNAP-Ed Evaluation Framework, the following outcome indicators can be used to evaluate intervention progress and success.

Readiness and Capacity – Short Term (ST)	Changes – Medium Term (MT)	Effectiveness and Maintenance – Long Term (LT)	Population Results (R)
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Individual

Environmental
Settings

[MT5](#)

Sectors of Influence

- MT5: Pantries improve assessment scores by implementing various PSE strategies

Evaluation Materials

The pantry assessment tool is used to measure changes made by pantries. A data collection platform is used to enter pantry assessments on-line. The pantry coordinator survey and interview are used for process evaluation and assesses outcomes of participating in PA HPI, ease of implementing various strategies, usefulness of available materials and pantry client input.

Additional Information

The PA HPI website, www.feedingpa.org/hpi, includes additional resources such as recipes and video materials.

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