



Food Insecurity and Advocacy

LC 7





Introduction



- The inability to consistently access healthy foods impacts the physical and mental health of Cincinnati residents
- CAIN (Churches Active in Northside) addresses food insecurity by hosting a tri-weekly choice food pantry to provide food and resources to the Cincinnati community
- Last year, we created English and Spanish surveys targeted to CAIN food pantry users to evaluate existing CAIN programs and determine what additional services were most desirable





Introduction



- Our advocacy project is focusing on a current piece of legislation, **Produce Rx**, which works to increase access to affordable healthy foods through monthly healthcare provider visits.
- We aim to address these barriers in our advocacy project to further reduce the implications of food insecurity.



PRx Produce Prescription Program Basics

PRx programs allow clinicians to provide monthly monetary fruit and vegetable prescriptions to patients that meet the criteria of food insecurity and diet related disease.

The PRx Process

1

Patients are recruited by a health care provider to participate in the PRx program.



2

Patients attend monthly visits to their provider to receive nutrition education and have health metrics collected. Pre and Post surveys are completed.

3

Patients are given monthly prescriptions for the family.



4

Patients and family members redeem prescriptions for fruits & vegetables at participating Produce Perks sites.



Data Analysis & Community Impact

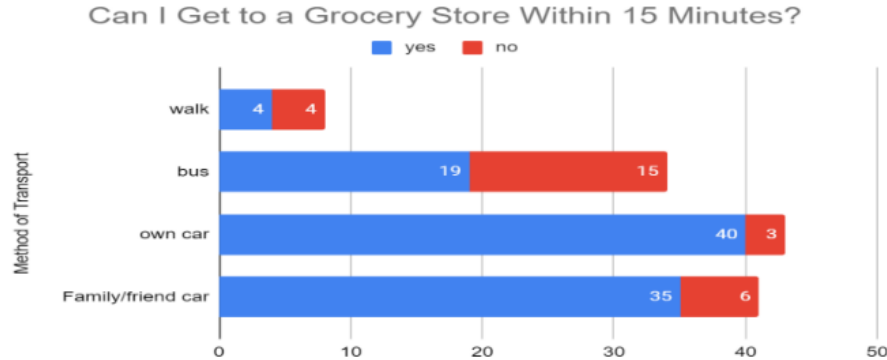
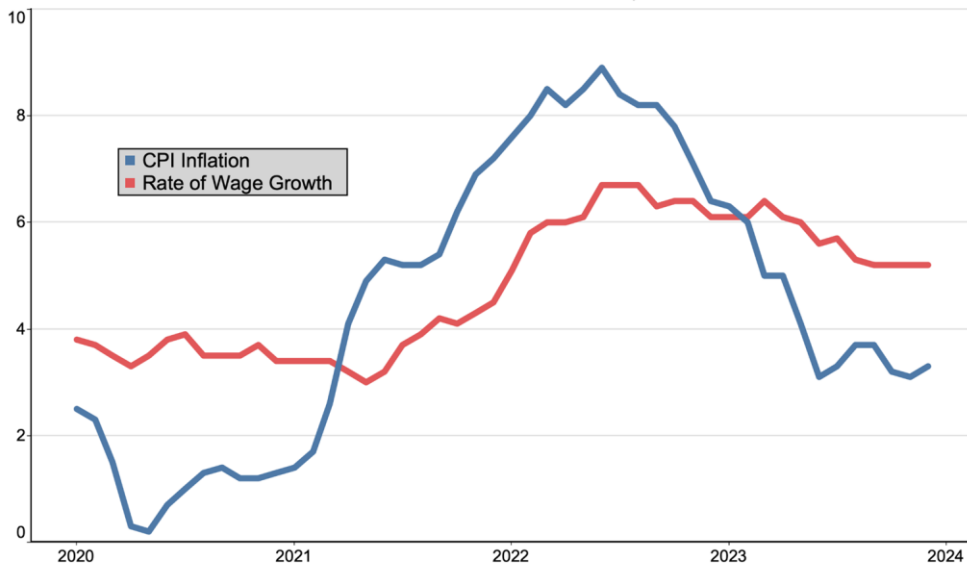


Fig 1. The ability to get to a grocery store within 15 minutes varied with the primary means of transportation that surveyees relied on. People who had access to a car were more likely to be able to get to a grocery store within 15 minutes, however those who relied on public transport like using the bus were less likely to be able to do so. Distribution showing the primary method of transport of respondents and their ability to get to a grocery store in 15 minutes.



Data Analysis & Community Impact

INFLATION AND MEDIAN WAGE GROWTH, 2020 – 2023



Sources: Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (Inflation); Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (Median wage).

EconoFact econofact.org

GOALS: **PRODUCE ADVOCACY PROGRAM**

WHO: People with financial barriers to access to nutritious food

Action: Healthcare provider prescriptions

Why: because inflation makes buying produce for \$30 unreasonable per month

Policy Analysis & Recommendations

- In 2023, Produce Rx provided \$22,400 worth of produce to families in Hamilton County, targeting areas with high rates of Black infant mortality.
 - Of the 180 participants, 82% of infants were born at healthy weights, and 90% reached full term.
- However, the program only reached a fraction of those in need, with overall increases in maternal health issues like pre-pregnancy obesity, chronic illness, and preterm births.
- Expanding the program to provide nutritional support outside of pregnancy could address these broader health challenges and reduce financial strain.
- As detailed on the next slides, there are numerous ways this policy can be changed to bring about better outcomes to a larger patient population.



Policy Modifications

- We propose that the program include funding for transportation support, such as providing bus passes to participants. This would enable patients to more easily access grocery stores and also healthcare providers, increasing their ability to benefit from the program.
- Would also want to expand the program to include a broader range of participants, specifically individuals with chronic diseases such as diabetes or pregnant individuals as well.
- This would all be in an effort to decrease the incidence of rates of chronic illness and pre-pregnancy obesity and lessen the financial burden on the families that do face food insecurity.



Advocacy Strategy

- Provide PCP and ED w option to include EMR prompts alerting physicians of eligible patients
 - Easily identify qualifying patients
 - Order produce perks for those patients
- Reach out to local grocery stores to make donations to the program
 - Kroger, Meijer
- Utilize collected data to emphasize significance of produce Rx
 - significant role in maintaining health of community
- Consistent implementation
 - Improve nutritional knowledge base of official and active users in the area





THANK YOU!

