DINNER Rx

Food As Medicine

GREENER BY DEFAULT

You want to provide the best possible care and nutrition, while also meeting your hospital's financial and sustainability targets. Greener by Default addresses all of these needs simultaneously.

Why Greener by Default?

Greener by Default is a research-based program that provides expertise in behavioral strategies to "nudge" patients and staff to make sustainable, healthy food choices without restricting their choices. The core concept is simple: make plant-based meals the default option, while giving patients and staff the choice to opt into meals with meat or dairy.

Why Plant-Based?

Scientific research shows that plant-based eating patterns are linked to significantly lower risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, obesity, and certain cancers. Plant-based meals also have half the carbon footprint of animal-based meals.

Join leading institutions using Greener by Default such as:

CleanMed

NYC HEALTH+HOSPITALS

Stanford MEDICINE
Stanford Prevention Research Center

Benefits & Impact

HEALTH
Four of the most expensive health conditions are diet-related, including diabetes and heart disease. Plant-based diets can reduce short- and long-term healthcare costs and improve patient and staff well-being.

SUSTAINABILITY
Reducing energy and water use in hospitals can be challenging. Greener by Default has the potential to increase consumption of plant-based meals by up to 50%, reducing food-related emissions by 40% and water usage by 24%.

COST SAVINGS
Unlike other sustainability interventions that require expensive upfront investments, Greener by Default is cost-neutral, and can even save money by reducing food service costs.

PATIENT SATISFACTION
Serving an array of culturally diverse, delicious plant-based meals is sure to please a range of palates and support your hospital's efforts to increase patient satisfaction. Plant-based nutrition is also more inclusive and poses fewer allergy and food safety risks.

How it Works

Taking Stock

We start by reviewing your foodservice environments and ordering system to determine where we can most easily make the biggest impact. Greener by Default can work in patient meals, cafeterias, and more. Once we've jointly decided which food environments to focus on, Greener by Default analyzes your current menus and sales data, if available, to identify areas of opportunity.

Developing Strategies

Based on our menu analysis, we recommend a range of strategies, including:

- **Plant-Based Defaults:** Offering plant-based dishes as the main entrée, with the choice to add meat/dairy or switch to meat.
- **Climate-Friendly Ratios:** Increasing the ratio of plant-based to animal-based proteins and entrees.
- **Menu Engineering:** Leverage appealing names and optimal menu placement to increase consumption of existing plant-based options.

CASE STUDY:
New York City Hospitals

NYC Health + Hospitals partnered with Greener by Default to pilot plant-based Chef's Specials as the default lunch options for all inpatients in their network of 11 hospitals.

60%
chose plant-based meals

95%
were satisfied with their meal

500K
in annual cost savings

Due to the pilot's success, **NYC Health + Hospitals** has permanently implemented the program for patient lunches and dinners.

Pilot Design

Next, we work with your team to determine which strategies to pilot and how to evaluate the pilot's success. Pilots typically test one to three strategies, often in a phased approach, and run for 8-12 weeks. We help you develop data collection tools and identify indicators to monitor, which often include cost savings, patient and diner satisfaction, and carbon and water savings. We also work with you to identify plant-based dishes that reflect the cultural diversity, preferences, and dietary needs of the people you serve.

Pilot Implementation

We work directly with your culinary team or foodservice management company to ensure they have all of the resources necessary to seamlessly implement the pilot. This can include everything from staff training sessions and recipe development to project management and promotional language. We also work with your management/operations team to make sure they're able to collect all of the necessary data to gauge the pilot's success, including diner and patient satisfaction surveys, staff feedback, and purchasing or sales data.

Sharing Results

After the pilot, we analyze your data to calculate impact on your target indicators. If desired, we can work with you to expand or permanently implement the strategies. We can also help to publicize the pilot and translate your data into a story that you can share internally and externally.

GREENER BY DEFAULT

To get started, contact
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www.greenerbydefault.org/healthcare

For citations, visit
www.greenerbydefault.org/healthcare-citations