

# Empowering Healthy Choices:

# A Guide to Food Prescription Models

Whether you're looking to expand your services or enhance the impact of your existing programs, food prescription initiatives can lead to healthier, happier communities. This chart explores three different food prescription program models and key considerations for implementation.



## **Who the program is tailored to:**

Home delivery programs are essential for the most vulnerable members of our community: homebound individuals who are typically struggling with a chronic or debilitating health condition.

## **How it works:**

Individuals who would be best served by these programs are typically identified through assisted living and healthcare treatment programs (such as a diabetes treatment center). Program leaders then evaluate potential users and work with a nutritionist to plan boxes that would meet their needs. The first box may come with cooking supplies and recipes.

## **Pros:**

It offers a low barrier of entry to participants because they don't have to worry about transportation or about shopping for their produce.

## **Cons:**

Home delivery adds a layer of complexity for program coordinators because they have to coordinate the logistics of delivery, making it difficult to scale and expand. In addition, if the participants do not like the options they are being given, there may be more food waste.

## **Who the program is tailored to:**

These programs are typically tailored to families who want to make decisions for themselves about nutrition and dietary needs.

## **How it works:**

The food prescription program will build a partnership with a local grocery store to allow program participants to shop for fruits and vegetables. The participants are provided a method for purchasing the produce for free, such as a punch card or scan card they can provide the grocery store employee upon checkout.

## **Pros:**

It allows the individual to have complete control over the produce their family is consuming, empowering them to account for specific needs, likes and dislikes. This often generates more buy-in to participation and overall health.

## **Cons:**

Shopping programs require the user to have reliable transportation. At the same time, choices are limited to what is available at the store, which can be a challenge for areas that struggle with access to fresh fruits and vegetables.



## **Pick-Up Programs**

These programs provide boxes of produce for pick up.



## **Who the program is tailored to:**

This model is tailored to a wide range of individuals and families. It can be especially useful as a way to support individuals and families who may not qualify for benefits like SNAP, but who may need help supplementing their food supply with fresh fruits and vegetables.

## **How it works:**

Community members enrolled in the program pick up boxes of fruits and vegetables on a weekly or biweekly basis. The produce is typically provided by a community garden or with produce from local farmers. The first box may come with cooking supplies and recipes.

## **Pros:**

This model requires less logistical coordination with participants because they are picking up their boxes from a central location. It can also allow for tailored boxes for participants and helps households with limited community access to fruits and vegetables.

## **Cons:**

This model requires a high level of commitment from program participants because they must prioritize picking up their boxes on a regular basis. Program coordinators must maintain a consistent supply of fruits and vegetables for the boxes and offer a safe pick-up location that is comfortable and accessible to participants.