



New Partnership to Address Food Insecurity in Brooklyn

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NONPROFIT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATION PARTNER WITH INDEPENDENT PROVIDER ASSOCIATION AND ANTI-POVERTY FOUNDATION TO ADDRESS FOOD INSECURITY IN BROOKLYN

Brooklyn, NY – Today, Bridging Access To Care announces the partnership with Robin Hood Foundation and EngageWell IPA to address food insecurity in Brooklyn.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on low-income communities of color. According to the latest NYC Poverty Tracker's COVID-19 Survey Report published by the Center on Poverty and Social Policy at the Columbia University in March 2021, "Before the pandemic, roughly 10 percent of New Yorkers visited a food pantry at one point in a year. Since March 2020, a third of New Yorkers in the sample received free groceries or meals from a food pantry, church, or any place that provides free food." Furthermore, 50% of Black New Yorkers in the sample reported an experience of food hardship since March 2020, and 41% of Brooklyn residents in the sample have visited a food pantry to meet their food needs.

"The communities we serve are in crisis. It is not obvious to tell if someone is hungry. The pandemic creates isolation and halts business and employment, making an already hidden issue even harder to expose. We are very grateful for the Robin Hood Foundation's partnership and generous support to address Brooklyn's food insecurity issue. In collaboration with EngageWell IPA, the funds will provide immediate and temporary relief to lessen the burden of our clients and community members, many of them are low-income, Black African and Latinx Americans," said **Nadine Akinyemi, Executive Director, Bridging Access To Care.**

"The impacts of the pandemic will continue to reverberate throughout hard-hit communities like Flatbush, Brooklyn for months and years to come. Unprecedented challenges call for unique solutions, and Bridging Access to Care has stepped up to the challenge with their dedicated volunteer network and holistic approach to providing emergency food," said **Abdulrazakh Abdirahman, Program Officer, Robin Hood Foundation.**



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As a network, the EngageWell IPA (Independent Provider Association) brings together its advocacy strengths, human service capacity, and public health expertise to improve the well-being of low-income populations with a broad range of medical, socioeconomic, and BH issues. Early in the pandemic, when nearly 35% of the City's food pantries and soup kitchens closed, EngageWell developed the COVID-19 Food Relief Initiative among its network members in an attempt to preserve an already-fragile food safety-net system.

"When COVID-19 struck, many food pantries and congregate meal programs closed overnight, causing further suffering and isolation for program participants. With stark inequities in housing, healthcare and rates of COVID-19 infection, Black and Brown people should not also be worried where their next meal will come from," said **Kevin Muir, Executive Director of EngageWell IPA.**

Christopher Joseph, EngageWell's Director of Programs, adds, "EngageWell believes access to healthy food is a human right. Our new public-private partnerships are enhancing our commitment to expanding sustainable food and nutrition programs with our nonprofit and healthcare partners."

The distribution of free food boxes will take place every Friday from March 12th to May 21st, 2021, at 2261 Church Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 1226. Food items will include fruits, produce, eggs, milk, bread, and dried pantry products. Distribution begins at 11:30 AM and it is first come, first serve.

For update, please visit our [social media page](#).