Abbott And NACHC Launch Nationwide Food For Health Initiative To Make Nutritious Food A Core Part Of Healthcare

- The *NACHC and Abbott Food for Health Initiative* is a multi-year "food is medicine" effort to support the integration of nutrition as a foundational component of primary care provided by Community Health Centers (CHCs) across the country
- Certification program alongside training and resources are designed to help health centers offer real-world approaches that provide healthy food and support to prevent and manage chronic diseases
- Initiative will reach 1,500+ CHCs providing affordable, comprehensive, effective care to 52.3 million people, including 1 in 7 Americans and 1 in 3 in rural America

ABBOTT PARK, Ill. and BETHESDA, Md., Aug. 17, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Abbott (NYSE: ABT) and the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) announced a multi-year "food is medicine" effort – called the *NACHC and Abbott Food for Health Initiative* – aimed at making healthy, nutritious food a core part of primary healthcare at Community Health Centers (CHCs) across the U.S.

Studies show good nutrition is essential for health and plays a critical role in disease prevention and treatment, especially for chronic diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular disease.[1] The NACHC-Abbott partnership will include a national certification program designed to help CHCs develop the systems and capacity to advance food for health, along with structured learning, training and knowledge-sharing for CHC staff to build capabilities and expertise in addressing immediate nutrition needs, integrating nutrition into healthcare delivery, and preventing and managing nutrition-related chronic diseases.

"Since the first health center opened, Community Health Centers – the nation's largest network of primary care providers – have led the way in addressing food insecurity and integrating nutrition into care delivery," said Kyu Rhee, MD, MPP, President and CEO, NACHC. "Our collaboration with Abbott builds on that legacy by strengthening Community Health Centers' capacity to prevent and manage nutrition-related conditions through evidence-based, practical solutions that are designed to improve health outcomes."

"We often think about healthcare as what happens in a doctor's office, but health is also shaped by access to nutritious food and knowledge of the role of food in your health," said Melissa Brotz, Senior Vice President, Abbott and President of Abbott Fund, the company's philanthropic foundation. "*Food for Health* is about bringing those things together – and we're excited to work with NACHC and Community Health Centers to help make nutrition a core part of how people prevent disease, manage chronic conditions and live healthier."

NACHC and Abbott have worked together since 2023 to advance food for health with CHCs. Building on this earlier work, in 2025 NACHC and Abbott assessed CHCs across 37 states to determine what's working, where gaps exist and what is needed to expand food for health in health centers. This analysis found strong interest in integrating nutrition and care, but fragmented funding, training, data collection and clinical implementation remain key barriers to expanding these efforts across CHCs.

The *NACHC and Abbott Food for Health Initiative* was strategically designed to help close these gaps, with a focus on providing CHCs with the support they need to address real-life barriers to nutrition and health in the communities they serve. The framework is made up of three key components:

- **Food for Health Learning Lab**, a structured learning program designed to build nutrition literacy and expertise across the CHC workforce, and guide health centers in implementing and measuring food is medicine efforts.
- **Food for Health Community of Practice**, a national peer-learning network that will connect health centers to share promising practices, troubleshoot challenges and learn from top experts.
- **Food for Health CORE (Certification of Readiness and Excellence)**, a voluntary national certification program that will recognize and support CHCs in developing the systems, processes and competencies needed to advance food for health efforts.

The *NACHC and Abbott Food for Health Initiative* is a signature program of NACHC's *Center for Nutrition and Health,* bringing together public and private partners, CHCs, and other stakeholders. The broader goal of the center is to serve as an innovation hub dedicated to moving food-based clinical care from separate efforts to a coordinated body of programs and policy initiatives that improve health outcomes.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is "Food is Medicine"?
A: Food is Medicine is an approach that recognizes the important role nutrition plays in preventing, managing and treating disease. It focuses on connecting people with nutrition support and healthy food as part of their overall healthcare.

Q: What is chronic disease?
A: Chronic diseases are long-term health conditions that often require ongoing care and management. Common examples include heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

Q: Why is nutrition important to preventing chronic disease?
A: Good nutrition is a foundation of good health and can play an important role in helping prevent and manage chronic diseases

such as diabetes and heart disease. Access to nutritious food, combined with healthcare and education, can help people improve their long-term health and well-being.

Q: How can Food is Medicine help improve health?
A: Food is Medicine programs connect nutrition and healthcare to help people make healthier choices, manage chronic conditions and improve overall well-being. Through the *NACHC and Abbott Food for Health Initiative*, Community Health Centers will have additional tools and support to integrate nutrition into patient care.

Q: What evidence supports the Food Is Medicine approach?
A: Research suggests Food is Medicine interventions can improve health outcomes and help reduce healthcare utilization and costs.

About the National Association of Community Health Centers
NACHC's mission is to champion Community Health Centers delivering affordable, effective, comprehensive primary care that is community-driven and improves health for all. For more information, visit www.nachc.org.

About Abbott
Abbott is a global healthcare leader that helps people live more fully at all stages of life. Our portfolio of life-changing technologies spans the spectrum of healthcare, with leading businesses and products in diagnostics, medical devices, nutritionals and branded generic medicines. Our 122,000 colleagues serve people in more than 160 countries. Together with our foundation, Abbott Fund, we partner with trusted organizations to build programs that strengthen care, improve access and help families and communities thrive. We're committed to building a healthier future by inspiring lifelong habits that support well-being and help to prevent chronic disease for generations to come. Connect with us at Abbott.com and on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube.

[1] *The Role of Nutrition in Chronic Disease (Nutrients, 2023)* *https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9921002/*

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