Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Caregiver Perspectives on Pediatric Primary Care Clinic-based Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

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Many pediatric primary care clinics provide food resources to support their patients' health and well-being. We aimed to explore families' perspectives regarding clinic-based food resources through interviews with caregivers of pediatric patients at two academic primary care clinics. We interviewed 40 caregivers, who were mostly mothers (90%) and Black (88%). We identified five themes: (1) food resources should be offered as a routine part of every clinic visit; (2) clinics should provide accurate, updated information about community-based resources; (3) caregivers appreciated prepared meals as a way to meet acute food needs; (4) caregivers felt food deliveries were convenient, particularly for families with transportation barriers; and (5) caregivers appreciated connection to government nutrition benefit programs as a source of long-term support. Clinics should consider working with community-based organizations to provide different types of food resources, including accurate information about food banks, prepared meals, food delivery, and assistance enrolling in benefit programs.

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