



GOD'S LOVE WE DELIVER®

CONTACT: Emmett Findley
God's Love We Deliver
212.294.8141
efindley@glwd.org

Rebecca Spitz
DKC
rebecca_spitz@dkcnews.com

**God's Love We Deliver and the Food is Medicine Coalition Talk Food is Medicine in Washington, D.C.
*The 9th Annual Food is Medicine Symposium***

New York, NY– With generous funding from The M·A·C AIDS Fund, God's Love We Deliver hosted the 2019 Advocacy Capacity Building Project Symposium September 9-11, at the offices of Hogan Lovell in Washington D.C. The Symposium brought together a diverse set of food and nutrition services agencies from across the nation, who deliver medically tailored diets to people who are too sick to shop or cook for themselves. Most agencies began more than 30 years ago at the height of the AIDS pandemic and have since expanded their missions to serve persons living with chronic and severe illness: HIV/AIDS, cancer, renal failure, Alzheimer's, severe diabetes, and many, many more. For this population: food is medicine.

The Symposium is the culmination of the year-long staff development program for medically tailored food and nutrition services agencies in how to advocate for medically tailored meal services at local, state and national levels, as well as a venue for updates and education about advocacy efforts for all food and nutrition services organizations nationwide. This year's symposium felt particularly momentous because of the widespread attention that the social determinants of health are receiving in the healthcare community. The Symposium gave us the chance to come together and reflect on the past year, discuss exciting new research, learn about the innovative work being done across the country, and advocate for policies that expand access to medically tailored meals.

This year, there was no shortage of expert guest speakers. Former NYS Medicaid Director and Partner at Manatt Health, Deborah Bachrach, joined us to discuss Medicaid's role in addressing the social risk factors that influence health. Senator Bob Casey Jr. of Pennsylvania provided us with opening remarks to kick off our Hill Visits where FIMC agencies meet with elected officials to educate them about the medically tailored meal intervention and the work of the Food is Medicine Coalition. And finally, we had the pleasure of receiving closing remarks from Congressman Jim McGovern of Massachusetts who co-leads the Food Is Medicine Working Group of the House Hunger Caucus. Representatives from the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation at Harvard Law School, AIDS United, NASTAD, Nonprofit Finance Fund, Northwestern Medical Center, Unite Us and Kaiser Permanente also presented.

On September 10, participants went to the Hill to advocate for the maintenance and importance of the Ryan White Treatment and Modernization Act and for a medically tailored meal pilot which would demonstrate the effectiveness of the intervention in a Medicare population.

In sum, the Symposium is a way to advance the advocacy goals of food and nutrition services from all over the country, share new and emerging research on food as medicine, discuss healthcare trends, and learn for colleagues and industry experts.

God's Love We Deliver was joined by the following agencies: Project Angel Food; Open Hand Atlanta; Project Angel Heart; AIDS Project New Haven;; Moveable Feast; Community Servings; MANNA; Project Open Hand; Heartland Health Outreach; Mama's Kitchen; Ceres Community Project; Radiant Health Centers; Food & Friends; Partners in Nutrition Indiana; Open Arms Minnesota; The Joy Bus;; The Health Trust; The Open Door; Tulsa Cares; Poverello Center; and Lifelong.

God's Love We Deliver would like to thank The M·A·C AIDS Fund for generously funding this year's Symposium as well as the work of God's Love We Deliver and our sister agencies.

###

About God's Love We Deliver

God's Love We Deliver cooks and home-delivers nutritious, medically tailored meals for people too sick to shop or cook for themselves. Founded in 1985 as a response to the AIDS pandemic, we now serve people living with more than 200 different diagnoses. To support the health and well-being of our clients, we provide ongoing nutrition assessment, education, and counseling, and advocate for food and nutrition support. God's Love is a non-sectarian organization serving individuals living with illness, and their children and caregivers. With a community of more than 15,000 volunteers, we deliver 1.9 million meals annually. All services are free to clients and full of love. For more information, visit godslovewedeliver.org.