

Six Steps to Engage Hospitals on Summer Food

1. **Check out a Hospital’s Community Needs Assessment.** To find a hospital’s community needs assessment, look on its website on the main page or under the “About” section. That document, and the implementation plan, will enable you to see if a hospital is already participating in anti-hunger or food access work.
2. **Contact the Hospital to Discuss Summer Meals.** Hospitals will list a contact for their “Community Benefits Report” who will be knowledgeable about the hospital’s efforts to implement the report, including any anti-hunger work in the report. If the hospital is already participating in anti-hunger work, reach out to the contact(s) listed in their report about becoming a summer meals sponsor or site, if eligible. If a hospital does not already participate in any anti-hunger work, contact a staff member in the community relations department of the hospital with information on the child food insecurity rates in their community, and how getting involved in SFSP can help.
3. **Be a Voice in the Hospital’s Planning.** When hospitals make community health improvement plans they must include community representation on the review board. Being a part of a hospital’s improvement plan is a great way to discuss childhood hunger and possibilities for the hospital to improve the health and nutritional wellbeing of their community’s children.
4. **Host a Community Forum.** Partner with local anti-hunger organizations partners to bring new stakeholders to the table. Invite your local hospital to participate in the forum and highlight the role they can play with SFSP. Educate people about SFSP and encourage them to get involved. These events provide an opportunity to build relationships and engage in joint efforts to address childhood hunger.
5. **Connect a Hospital with an existing Sponsor and/or Site.** An existing sponsor may give suggestions on how to start and strengthen a hospital’s program. If a hospital does not have the capacity to become a sponsor, connecting them with a nearby sponsor could help them to become a site.
6. **Recruit Hospitals to Help with Outreach.** Hospitals can help promote SFSP in the community by educating patients on the program and posting information on social media. Drop-off outreach materials to the hospital to place in waiting rooms, doctors’ offices, and hang in elevators.