

**MCO NMDOH Learning Collaborative Webinar:  
Healthy Food and Nutrition Initiatives and In-Lieu Of Services  
August 1, 2025**

The MCO NMDOH Learning Collaborative met in August to focus on healthy food and nutrition initiatives.

In-lieu of service (ILOS): The Legislature recently passed HB 26 which authorizes HHSC to permit MCOs to offer nutrition counseling and instruction services as an ILOS and directs HHSC to pilot medically tailored meals for certain high-risk pregnant Medicaid Members. Dr. Jeffery Huebner, Chief Medical Officer for the Wisconsin Medicaid Program at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, shared experiences and lessons learned from implementing medically tailored meals as an ILOS, which was launched in early 2025. The Wisconsin program was developed in partnership with their state's food is medicine coalition and health plans and was accelerated by their Medicaid director's support.

The ILOS program in Wisconsin offers eligible members:

- Up to two meals per day
- For up to twelve weeks, or longer if medically appropriate (up to one year)
- Initial and follow up visits with a registered dietitian

To be eligible Medicaid Members:

- Must be enrolled in a BadgerCare Plus HMO or Medicaid SSI HMO may be eligible for the meals
- The member must have coverage with an HMO that has opted in to offer the benefit
- Members must also be in one of the eligible populations to receive the benefit
  - High risk pregnant or postpartum members
  - Members hospitalized for diabetes in the past 90 days
  - Members hospitalized for cardiovascular disease in the past 90 days

## How It Works

Medical Referral	Self Referral	HMO Referral
Care provider identifies the service is medically appropriate and refers patient to the HMO	Medicaid member learns about the service and requests it directly from their HMO	HMO identifies prospective candidates and reaches out proactively
HMO verifies medical appropriateness, determines eligibility and authorizes the service	HMO determines eligibility and medical appropriateness and authorizes the service	

See slides and the webinar for more details about provider enrollment, the program, etc. Also, you can find a list of resources in the slides.

During the webinar we also learned about Texas based food intervention projects. Rhonda Aubrey with Factor Health Labs at Dell Medical School presented findings from two nutrition intervention studies. The first study, conducted with Boys and Girls Club in Austin, demonstrated significant improvements in children's fruit and vegetable consumption after a 4-week intervention that included weekly food boxes and grocery cards. The second study, the Nurture program with Driscoll Health Plan, showed high engagement rates among pregnant women, with 99% enrollment and 82% completion of nutritional counseling sessions. The program saw an increase in vaginal births, reduction in preterm births and gestational diabetes and improvement in several other health outcomes. See slides for details about the programs and the results. Both programs highlighted the importance of personalization, engagement strategies, and scalable approaches to successfully improve health outcomes.