



Improving Nutrition and Food Access in a Medicaid Population

Outcomes of a Food-as-Medicine Intervention

TANGELO at a glance

What we do

Tangelo is a comprehensive food benefits platform built to administer flexible, clinically-grounded food-as-medicine programs at scale. Its mission is to improve access to nutritious food, thereby achieving better health outcomes within at-risk communities.

Benefits

- Food prescriptions to address a variety of chronic diseases and nutrient imbalances
- Culturally appropriate and customized to each member's food preferences and allergies
- Delivery to members' homes at no cost to them
- Multilingual platform and customer service
- The Diet ID digital dietary assessment measured and tracked diet quality, BMI, healthy behaviors, and more
- Comprehensive nutrition education provided

Intervention

Tangelo's 12-week program provided daily medically-tailored, culturally-sensitive meals or groceries to 1,853 low-income adults in a California care plan. Foods followed clinical guidelines for specific diagnoses while respecting individual needs. Diet quality and weight were assessed at baseline and after 90 days.

Population demographics

- Residents of Southern CA
- Enrolled in Medicare Health Plan
- Average age = 60.9
- 40% male, 59% female, 1% other or prefer not to answer

Languages

62% Vietnamese 24% English 11% Spanish
1% Korean 2% Other

Objective

Poor diet quality is the top predictor of chronic disease and premature death, disproportionately affecting low-income and minority groups. Food-as-medicine solutions can improve nutrition, health, quality of life, and reduce healthcare costs.

Impact*

Members whose Diet Quality Improved 55%

Over half of the population improved their diet quality during the program.

Diet Quality Improvement 79%

After 10–13 weeks of medically-tailored food benefits, diet quality scores improved by an average of 3.3 points, reducing chronic disease risk by ~33%.

Weight Loss Experience 40%

In this population, 40% reported weight loss. Not all members were overweight at baseline.

Weight Loss (Self-Reported) 11.5 lbs

Weight decreased by an average of over 11 pounds among those who lost weight.

Average Projected Cost Savings \$1991

For members with improved diet quality, the estimated \$2,000 annual cost savings per member stem from reduced care costs due to lower chronic disease risk.

Notes

*Values are based on participants with a diet quality score ≤ 8 , the program's eligibility criteria (n=1,349).

Food-as-Medicine Intervention Case Study (continued)

Solution in action

Tangelo's platform delivers scalable, personalized food-as-medicine programs for low-income, multicultural communities. This intervention improved diet quality, weight, and health outcomes while reducing disease burden and healthcare costs, offering real-time meal prescriptions tailored to individual health needs and preferences.



Tangelo's menu features culturally tailored meals for Latinx, Vietnamese, and Korean communities, with more in development, celebrating health and cultural diversity.

Notes

Diet Quality Assessment

Diet quality is objectively measured using the Healthy Eating Index (HEI) 2020, the most robustly researched and validated tool for measuring diet quality. Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, HEI is particularly useful as it correlates strongly to disease risk and projected healthcare costs.

Diet Quality Risk Scores

- 1-3 High Risk
- 4-8 Moderate Risk
- 9-10 Low Risk

Diet Quality Predicts Disease Risk

For every 1-point increase in diet quality, there is an estimated 10% reduction in chronic disease risk.

Return on Investment Calculation

The projected cost savings based on improvement in diet quality was calculated using Diet ID's ROI calculator, which is accessible at dietid.com/roi-calculator

What Tangelo participants are saying...

“Thank you - love the meals, variety and knowing that I'm enjoying a HEALTHY meal... really appreciate Tangelo's care and convenience of delivery.”

“The meals are very tasty and healthy. Thanks to this food program I have adopted a healthier diet. I can say that it is helping me.”