The California Food Is Medicine Coalition Receives $100,000 Grant from CVS Health
Supporting Urgent Community Food Needs Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, April 7, 2020 – The California Food Is Medicine Coalition (CalFIMC) received a $100,000 grant from CVS Health, supporting the coalition’s response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The grant is part of more than $1 million CVS Health and its foundations have given to address food insecurity and other community needs in response to the challenges presented by the pandemic.

“The grant enables the six CalFIMC agencies to increase their services – delivering thousands of nutritious meals to low-income and medically fragile Californians who are sheltered in-place and at great risk of contracting the disease and more vulnerable to complications and death,” said Ann Thrupp, Director of CalFIMC. “We greatly appreciate the support CVS Health has provided CalFIMC to help respond to urgent community food needs for highly vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

CalFIMC agencies are active in San Francisco, Alameda, Santa Clara, Sonoma, Marin, Los Angeles and San Diego counties, serving collectively over 50,000 meals per week, and over 2.6 million meals annually to populations representing the diverse communities. Many of the people the agencies serve live alone without support systems and all have serious illnesses such as HIV, heart disease, diabetes and cancer. All of these agencies have lost significant numbers of volunteers during this pandemic, and are facing increased costs to meet demand.

Cathryn Couch, Chair of CalFIMC and CEO of Ceres Community Project explained, “Due to increased safety protocols, we are limiting shift sizes and relying more heavily on paid staff, which is increasing the cost of service. At the same time, demand is growing, while many of our regular clients need additional support, and we expect this to continue as the pandemic spreads. This grant from CVS Health is helping us to scale up nutritious meal and grocery delivery services to care for these medically vulnerable clients.”

Eileen Howard Boone, SVP of Corporate Social Responsibility & Philanthropy at CVS Health, President of CVS Health Foundation added, “We know that as a result of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, there are many people in the communities we serve who are faced with urgent needs. As part of our ongoing commitment to building healthier communities, we are pleased to support CalFIMC in response to this pandemic.”

CalFIMC is seeking additional funding that is urgently needed to meet demand for home-delivered healthy meals to highly vulnerable people during this crisis. CalFIMC is part of a national movement to
employ medically tailored nutrition and food interventions as a way to improve health outcomes, decrease hospitalizations, and impact healthcare costs. CalFIMC is comprised six community-based non-profit organizations: Project Open Hand in San Francisco, Ceres Community Project and Food For Thought in the North Bay, Project Angel Food in Los Angeles, Mama’s Kitchen, in San Diego, and The Health Trust in Santa Clara County.

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