

# Assessment of Dallas County Food Pantries as Novel Partners for Health Promotion Interventions

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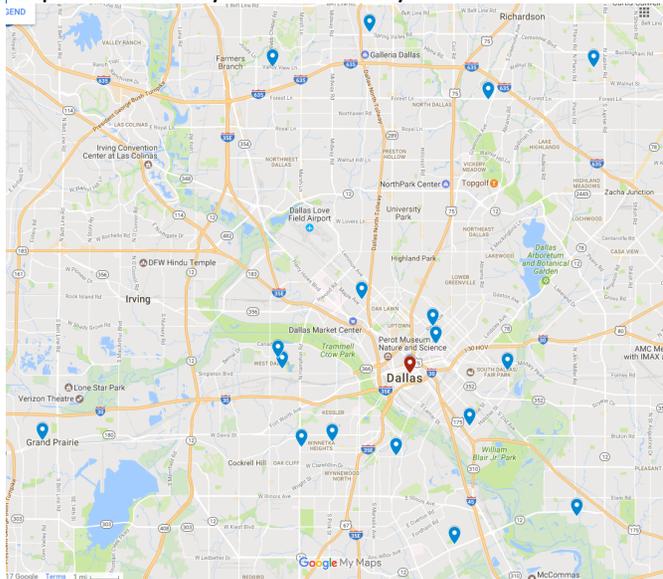
## Introduction

Food insecurity is associated with suboptimal health behaviors and outcomes. The potential to partner with food pantries in health promotion interventions is an emerging area of interest. In this study, we explored pantries' capacity to support onsite health promotion interventions.

## Methods

We assessed the feasibility of health promotion interventions at food pantries across Dallas County. All pantries are members of the Crossroads Community Services charitable food distribution network. With support from Robert Wood Foundation and our robust community academic partnership, we conducted participant observation at multiple pantries (n=18) during food distribution days. We observed and documented organization logistics, staff operations, and client relationships. Onsite focus groups (n=7) in English and Spanish explored pantry and client relationships and client receptivity to health promotion activities.

## Map of Observed Pantry Sites in Dallas County



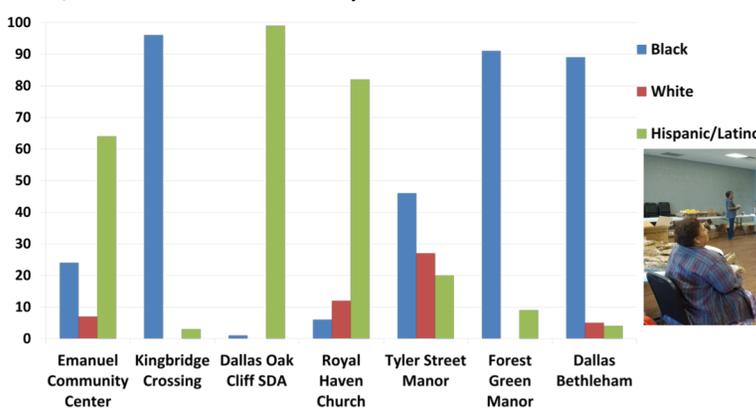
## Results

Overall, pantries served an average of 158 clients (range: 52-494). Pantries differed in where they were located, facility type and size, how often they distributed food, if they offered services in addition to food, and the population served. Clients reported looking to their food pantries as a source of help and guidance, particularly regarding their diet. Additionally, nearly all pantry clients reported being desirous of opportunities to participate in health promotion activities and research.

### Food Pantry Characteristics

	Emanuel Community Center	Kingbridge Crossing	Dallas Oak Cliff SDA	Royal Haven Baptist Church	Tyler Street Manor	Forest Green Manor	Dallas Bethlehem center
Type	Church	DHA	Church	Church	Agency	DHA	Agency
# of Households served	112	66	40	39	78	43	234
# of Individuals	310	112	120	156	80	44	494
# of distributions a month	3x/ mo	1x/ mo	1x/ mo	1x/ mo	1x/ mo	1x/ mo	Weekly

### Racial/ethnic Characteristics of Pantry Clients



## Conclusions

Food pantries can be a natural point for health education, promotion and research. However, there are key factors that may influence the success of such efforts:

- Staff/volunteer capacity and organization is key to successful adoption of intervention
- Routine inclusion of additional services (i.e. classes, clothing, connection to additional resources) provides critical groundwork for health promotion/research activities
- Pantry flexibility and receptivity is critical to success of potential intervention implementation
- Pantries with strong client relationships will ensure success of future intervention and research

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