



NOURISH
ANCHOR COHORT

2021 -
2023

CREATING HEALTH IN SOLIDARITY WITH COMMUNITY

Montréal Anchor Team
Impact Report

CARTE PROXIMITÉ
ÉCHANGEABLE CONTRE DES
ALIMENTS FRAIS, ENTIERS ET LOCAUX
DANS LES MARCHÉS PARTICIPANTS



Centre intégré
universitaire de santé
et de services sociaux
du Centre-Sud-
de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Québec

Building Bridges to Food Security through Proactive Investments in Population Health

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MONTREAL ANCHOR TEAM

The Montréal Anchor Team's work is situated within the context of the Nourish Anchor Cohort, a two-year national innovation program that ran from 2021 - 2023. The goal of the Anchor Cohort was to support health systems across Canada to develop anchor leadership, signalling their commitment to harness the long-term presence, mission, and resources of health care institutions to anchor wellbeing in their communities through food. The Cohort brought together seven multidisciplinary place-based teams to work on 'portfolios of systems interventions' that activated community assets and explored innovative food for health solutions. The accomplishments outlined in this report reflect their efforts to nudge local and regional health systems toward meaningful transformation in order to promote better health for people and the planet.

The Montréal Anchor Team operates in the Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal and consists of organizations committed to reducing food insecurity for the approximately 350,000 people in the area in order to promote sustainability, health equity, and wellbeing. The Team includes [CIUSSS du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal](#), an integrated university, health and social service centre with public health direction; [Carrefour Solidaire Community Food Centre](#), a Good Food Organization; [Share the Warmth / Partageons l'Espoir](#), a food security organization; [Accueil Bonneau](#), a charitable organization working with the unhoused; and, the Ville-Marie borough of the City of Montréal. Together, this network of health and social services facilities includes 578 short-term care beds and 2,950 long-term care beds,

The team employs a strong grassroots, consultative, partnership-oriented approach to leverage 'health system assets' to expand food access for the general population, as well as those experiencing higher rates of food insecurity. This includes experimenting - and when appropriate, scaling - innovative ideas, such as food prescriptions made by medical professionals, voucher programs for the purchase of healthy groceries from local retailers, offering select meals to patients and non-patients in hospital cafeterias, and the sharing of health care spaces such as kitchens and outside areas for urban agriculture with community organizations and residents (referred to as "mutualization" of health care spaces). The team's efforts are enabled by the Provincial government's policies and practices to encourage the local procurement of food by public institutions, including health care, with a renewed emphasis on adopting prevention-oriented strategies.

TACKLING WICKED PROBLEMS THROUGH FOOD FOR HEALTH LEVERS

Each team in the Anchor Cohort named a 'Wicked Problem' that they looked to address during their time in the Cohort. Wicked problems were identified through a process of problem space mapping, stakeholder engagement, and surfacing the historical roots of how problems came to be.

Montréal Anchor Team's Wicked Problem

Food security and food autonomy are often tackled in silos, with community, health, municipal, and policy sectors working separately. Health care in Montréal is currently too focused on curative care instead of working preventatively.

The Montréal Anchor Team identified 11 priority Food for Health Levers to action in their work. The Food for Health Levers were developed by Nourish to frame powerful ways of impacting climate, equity, and community well-being through food in health care. These leverage points help us make connections between our food, health, social, and ecological systems and reach their greatest potential when working in concert.



INNOVATION IN ACTION

During the Anchor Cohort, the team employed a collaborative, experimental approach to developing and testing smaller-scale ideas at the program and policy level in four key areas:

1. A feasibility study to explore options for sharing kitchen spaces and other health care infrastructure with community organizations, and actioning associated recommendations once the study was complete
2. Expanding the Carte Proximité food voucher program to two new neighbourhoods in Southwest Montréal, Pointe-Saint-Charles and Saint-Henri, so anyone with a card can purchase food at selected not-for-profit grocers
3. Expanding the Hôpital Solidaire program, another voucher enabling anyone 'prescribed' by a health care practitioner access to free meals from the hospital cafeteria at the Hôpital de Verdun and Hôpital Notre-Dame
4. A networking event to bring together a wider range of stakeholders to engage in contributing to Nourish projects



Share the Warmth's market is an example of where people can use the Carte Proximité. The main goal of this market is to make fruits and vegetables more accessible to lower income individuals.

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

The Montréal Anchor Team established a diverse portfolio of **13 mutually reinforcing interventions** that emerged from **17 initial ideas** identified during the planning phase. These include:

The CIUSSS team was successful in expanding the reach of two experimental programs designed to increase access to food for local residents:

- Nearly **doubling the number of health care professionals** distributing the Hôpital Solidaire program, which offers a voucher that enables local residents to purchase food from local hospital cafeterias - and **doubling the number of residents able to secure a meal from hospital food services in their neighbourhood.**
- Expanding the number of partners in the Carte Proximité program **by two**, and introducing the program in **two new neighbourhoods** (Pointe-Saint-Charles and Saint-Henri), which increased the number of program participants by **75 households and hundreds of residents.**

The immediate effect of the first two innovations is a **measurable increase in the number of local residents with increased access to quality food** by several hundred people. Moreover, the findings from the team's feasibility study on how to share kitchens and other food infrastructure (e.g., for urban agriculture) from health care opened up new possibilities to expand **access to food through grassroots, partnership-oriented innovation.**



The Hôpital Solidaire program provides vouchers for free meals from the hospital cafeteria at Hôpital Verdun and Hôpital Notre-Dame. A program coordinator reports: "The Hôpital Solidaire program has been a game changer in terms of attendance at appointments. It is a very important incentive to travel to the clinic."

OUTCOMES & IMPACT



97% of those receiving a Carte Proximité report satisfaction with the program and reduced grocery bills



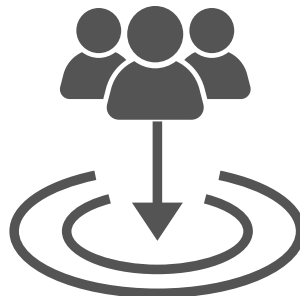
16.4% reduction in severe food insecurity as a result of the Carte Proximité



Over 30% of respondents say their attendance of food aid services decreased while they had a Carte Proximité



28% of Hôpital Solidaire program participants report a reduction in food insecurity



Over 90% of respondents say they buy more fruit and vegetables since receiving the Carte Proximité



Nearly 100% of program participants have increased their access to healthy food and noted a measurable reduction in food costs



The team has demonstrated how health care organizations can leverage their assets to develop practical programs that address food insecurity - ideas that can continue to be scaled by the CIUSSS Centre-Sud-de-L'île-de-Montreal and across the larger metropolitan area

LOOKING FORWARD

The team's primary focus remains reducing food insecurity by exploring new partnerships to expand their existing programs, for instance with nearby hospitals like the CHUM, which would greatly increase the number of people reached by their two food vouchers. They would also be interested to take on a consulting and advising role with other public institutions to help scale the work, but need to maintain existing funding pathways so organizations like Share the Warmth / Partageons l'Espoir can continue to offer the Carte Proximité. They have also begun to consider the needs of new populations, such as the elderly with dysphagia, and are exploring possibilities to offer pureed and minced meals via homecare services. For the mutualization of kitchen and other health care spaces, they are continuing to connect with community organizations to establish norms and protocols for collaborating. They have considered that companies might also be good candidates for this program if their mandate is to increase access to food for food insecure populations. They are currently studying the best action plan to be able to realize these projects, including developing a partnership with Sentier Urbain to do urban agriculture in one of their parks with people living in precarious situations in Summer 2024.

Want to learn more? Reach out to the Montréal Anchor Team about their work, or contact Nourish if you're inspired to lead change in your own community.

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MONTREAL ANCHOR TEAM SNAPSHOT

CIUSSS Centre-Sud de l'Île-de-Montréal

Integrated health and social services centres ensure accessibility, continuity, and quality of services for people in their territory. They are reference points where people can go in case of health or psychosocial problems. There, they can receive appropriate services or be directed to another resource of the territorial services network. The CIUSSS Centre-Sud de l'Île-de-Montréal Anchor team members included:

- Food services, including procurement and logistics
- Nutrition department
- Community Organizers
- Public Health Department

Participating Departments:

- Hôpital Notre-Dame
- Hôpital de Verdun

Number of Meals Impacted

The Montréal Anchor Team provided approximately 25,000 free meals (a value of \$243,000.00) via their Hôpital Solidaire program from 2020 - 2023. The total amount deposited on Carte Proximité cards from 2020 - 2022 was \$251,834.00 with a redemption rate of 88%.

Carrefour alimentaire Centre-Sud (CACS)

Non-profit organization working to improve access to healthy food for all and support the development of a local, ecological, and solidarity-based food system.

Other organizations involved:

Share the Warmth / Partageons l'Espoir
L'accueil Bonneau

The CIUSSS is responsible for:

- **578** short-term care beds
- **2,950** long-term care beds
- **298** places in non-institutional resources for the elderly
- **4,077** places in non-institutional resources for other clientele (e.g., young people, people with an intellectual disability)
- **287** beds (Hôpital Notre-Dame)
- **271** beds (Hôpital de Verdun)



Communities Served:

The territory covered by the CIUSSS is 46 square km and a population of 308,200. The CIUSSS territory is divided into two care and service sectors across the south central area of Montréal:

- Faubourgs, Plateau-Mont-Royal and Saint-Louis-du-Parc
- Verdun, Côte-Saint-Paul, Ville-Émard, Saint-Henri, Petite-Bourgogne and Griffintown



The total budget for food services, including coordination across 25 kitchens and the food itself, is just over \$55M.

DETAILED INTERVENTIONS & OUTCOMES

MISSION IMPACT

REDUCED FOOD INSECURITY: AN ADDITIONAL 1,000 LOCAL RESIDENTS INCREASE FOOD SECURITY, WITH A 16.4% REDUCTION IN SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY AS A RESULT OF THE CARTE PROXIMITÉ PROGRAM.

INCREASED HEALTH: CARTE PROXIMITÉ RECIPIENTS REPORT 90% INCREASE IN PURCHASE OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, AS WELL AS OVERALL INCREASE IN QUALITY OF FOOD.

INCREASED PATIENT SATISFACTION: 90% OF CARTE PROXIMITÉ RECIPIENTS AND 100% OF HÔPITAL SOLIDAIRE RECIPIENTS SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRAMS.

SYSTEM TRANSITION

EXPANSION AND SPREAD OF PROGRAMMING TO NEARBY HOSPITALS: HÔPITAL NOTRE-DAME AND CHUM - LE CENTRE HOSPITALIER DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL

GENERAL AWARENESS IN HEALTH CARE OF THE ROLE HEALTH INSTITUTIONS CAN PLAY IN ENSURING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD TO PROMOTE WELLBEING.

INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIFFERENT WAYS THAT HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE CENTRES CAN INCREASE ACCESS TO FOOD FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS.

NUDGE SYSTEMS

NICHE INNOVATIONS

ENABLING CONDITIONS

#3A KITCHEN MUTUALIZATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

#3B IMPLEMENTING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SHARING HEALTH CARE KITCHEN SPACES & INFRASTRUCTURE WITH COMMUNITY

#5 NETWORKING EVENT ON FOOD ACCESS

#2 EXPANSION OF THE HÔPITAL SOLIDAIRE VOUCHER PROGRAM

#1 EXPANSION OF THE CARTE PROXIMITÉ VOUCHER PROGRAM

PROVINCIAL POLICIES THAT ACTIVELY SUPPORT LOCAL PROCUREMENT AND PREVENTION-ORIENTED ACTIVITIES BY THE HEALTH SECTOR | EARLIER COHORT WORK ON FOOD VOUCHER PROGRAMS AND FOOD MENUS CREATED A FOUNDATION TO BUILD UPON



Reference Number & Date	Title	Key Outcomes	Significance	Contributions
1. Summer 2022 - Ongoing	Expansion of the Carte Proximité Voucher Program	The addition of two partners allows for the card - which provides its holder with funds to purchase food in 20 markets in 10 boroughs of Montréal - to reach 75 new households and hundreds of residents. Evaluation reveals that food insecurity drops from 41% to 25% amongst the population using the card.	Expands the reach and impact of the program to a new geographic area of the city, builds trust between local groups and the hospital, and expands the capacity of health care to address health in an upstream way while working in partnership with community organizations to address food insecurity.	The Montréal Anchor Team led the expansion of the program with funding from Nourish's Prototyping Grant.
2. Summer 2022 - Ongoing	Expansion of the Hôpital Solidaire Voucher Program	The Food Services Department collaborated with one community organization to include the card in a "package" for health care professionals and with the Hôpital de Verdun and Hôpital Notre Dame to implement Hôpital Solidaire, a voucher program to provide free meals from the hospital cafeteria to local residents and patients in need, doubling distribution from 2 to 4 a day, and number of health care professionals distributing the card from 34 to 59. 100% of participants report a reduction in food insecurity and satisfaction with the program.	Offers another tool to encourage vulnerable patients' to attend appointments, prevent (re)hospitalization, expanding de-stigmatized access to fresh food, and strengthening partnerships between hospitals, community organizations, and residents. Can be replicated in other publicly funded hospitals across the region.	The Montréal Anchor Team's budget and connections were critical to initiating funding and implementing the initiative.
3a. Fall 2022	Kitchen Mutualization Feasibility Study	Completed a feasibility study to assess support and strategies for expanding access to existing	Hospital spaces are typically closed for use by non-health care staff, including community residents and	The Montréal Anchor Team conceptualized and coordinated the

		health care kitchen spaces for use by community organizations.	other organizations. The hospitals involved see their role as anchor institutions to increase this capacity and scale the availability of spaces for community use.	process for completing the feasibility study. Nourish supported costs with grant funding to bring this long-standing idea to fruition.
3b. Winter 2023 - Ongoing	Implementing Recommendations for Sharing Health Care Kitchen Spaces & Infrastructure with Community	Following the completion of the feasibility study, work is now focused on creating tools and guidelines to implement the strategy and assist community organizations and residents to access kitchens and other health care infrastructure.	Kitchen spaces and other infrastructure for public use are limited in this part of Montréal, resulting in unnecessary barriers to preparing healthy and culturally appropriate food for certain segments of the population. This approach models how to build bridges with community and establish innovative partnerships across sectors for the betterment of community wellbeing.	The Montréal Anchor Team is the main driver behind the study and implementing associated recommendations to make it live. They are currently seeking partners for pilots to test their approach and collaboration.
4. Winter 2023	Networking Event on Food Access	Sixty people attend a community event to explore opportunities for food access and to obtain a food kit.	Allows the team to more closely engage community residents, develop relationships, and surface needs.	The Montréal Anchor Team organized and facilitated the event with funding from a Nourish-McConnell grant.



NOURISH

Nourish believes food is a powerful way to build health for both people and the planet, in addition to providing comfort and healing to patients, creating more resilient communities, and addressing climate change.

Starting from a community of practice, we have grown to a network of leaders, organizations, and communities, shifting the focus upstream to work preventatively through food in health care.

Through our work with cohorts of leaders and action learning programs, we equip innovative individuals and teams with the skills and momentum to empower bold leadership in climate action and health equity. We work across community, institutional, and policy scales to steward food for health innovation.

Join us!

NourishLeadership.ca