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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.

About CalFIMC

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.

About Project Open Hand

Founded in 1985, Project Open Hand's mission is to improve health outcomes and quality of life by providing nutritious meals to the sick and vulnerable, caring for and educating our community. What began as a grassroots response to the AIDS epidemic in San Francisco, today POH is an innovative, outcome-driven, client-centered partner in the public health and medical arenas. A leader in the "Food is Medicine" movement in California and nationwide, POH prepares 2,500 medically tailored nutritious meals daily and provides 200 bags of healthy groceries to help sustain clients in San Francisco and Oakland. Project Open Hand employs a staff of 125, relies on the support of nearly 125 volunteers every day and is headquartered in San Francisco's Tenderloin with a second location in Oakland, CA. To learn more or refer patients, visit openhand.org.

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