

Food is Medicine – Pregnancy Program

Frequently Asked Question

1. What is the Food Medicine Pregnancy Program?

This New Mexico Turquoise Care benefit program provides healthy, culturally appropriate foods to support pregnant members and new mothers with diabetes (Type 1, Type 2 and gestational). The goal is to improve maternal and infant health outcomes by addressing nutritional needs during pregnancy and shortly after birth.

2. Who is eligible?

- 1) Pregnant members on a New Mexico Medicaid Managed Care plan (Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico, Molina Healthcare of New Mexico, Presbyterian Health Plan, or UnitedHealthcare); and
- 2) Members diagnosed with Type 1, Type 2, or gestational diabetes.

3. What types of foods are included?

Medically tailored groceries (MTGs) or medically tailored meals (MTM's) are designed to meet pregnancy and diabetes-related nutrition needs, such as:

- Lean proteins (chicken, fish, beans, lentils, tofu)
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Dairy or dairy alternatives
- Diabetes-friendly and medically tailored foods that support blood sugar management

4. How do I submit a referral?

- 1) A provider (OB, midwife, primary care, doula, nurse midwife), Care Coordinator, or another related professional submits a referral form to the members managed care organization (please select the link below for the MCO to get the appropriate referral form) form.
- 2) Members can also ask their provider, case manager, care coordinator, or health plan customer service about enrollment.
- 3) In the future the referrals can also be referred through the Closed Loop Referral System's (CLRS) FindHelp.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

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Providers

- Submit the universal referral form for eligible members.
- Determine the number of meals/boxes based on the member's linkage to other nutritional supports and needs.
- Check in on nutrition during prenatal and postpartum visits.

Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)

- Receive the referral form and verify eligibility.
- Reach out to the member, to confirm member preferences, including choice of meal provider and preference for meals or groceries.
- Offer care coordination if they are not already enrolled.
- Link Members to SNAP, WIC and other community and clinical linkages as needed.

Meal Providers

- Conduct a nutrition assessment tailored to pregnancy and diabetes needs.
- Support members with meal/box selection.
- Deliver medically tailored meals or grocery boxes directly to the member's home or pick-up location (where available).
- Resolve delivery issues to ensure members consistently receive support.

6. How long does the program last?

- 1) During pregnancy and up to 2 months postpartum, not to exceed 11 months total.
- 2) Duration and delivery frequency may vary based on health needs and vendor availability.

7. How are the foods delivered?

- 1) Home delivery in most areas.
- 2) Pick-up at community locations (where available).
- 3) Partnerships with local food banks and vendors to support rural and tribal communities.

8. Are the meals medically tailored?

Yes. Foods are designed with input from dietitians to support the dietary needs of pregnancy and diabetes. Members with gestational diabetes or Type 1/Type 2 diabetes may receive customized options to help manage blood sugar and overall health.

9. Is there a cost to participate?

No. The program is offered at no cost to eligible members as part of their Medicaid managed care benefit.

10. What are the program's goals?

- 1) Improve maternal health and reduce complications related to diabetes (e.g., gestational diabetes, preeclampsia).
- 2) Support healthy fetal growth and positive birth outcomes.
- 3) Reduce food insecurity and stress during pregnancy.
- 4) Connect families with long-term nutrition and community supports.

11. How does this program support cultural needs?

Food options are selected with cultural preferences in mind. We work with local vendors, food banks, and community organizations to ensure meals reflect diverse traditions and dietary practices.

12. Who are the program partners?

Program delivery may involve:

- Vendors such as Mom's Meals, Meals on Wheels, and Homestyle Direct.
- Local food banks such as Roadrunner Food Bank.
- Additional community-based organizations and national meal providers will continue to be on boarded.
- MCO's will work with local organizations to set up meal delivery sites as needed for Members who have delivery challenges.

13. How can providers get involved?

- 1) Submit the universal referral form.
- 2) Encourage members to participate and share feedback on health outcomes.

14. If there is a referral date but it has passed, will the MCO set a future date to ensure the member receives services for the full length of the program if needed?

Yes, MCOs will work to adjust start dates as appropriate to ensure members receive the full duration of the benefit, when clinically and programmatically indicated.

15. How are the delivery times communicated to members?

Delivery times are coordinated and communicated directly to members by the food provider.

16. Are the dietitians using the information on the referral form?

Yes, dietitians utilize the information provided on the referral form to tailor meal plans and ensure alignment with the member's clinical needs.

17. How are MCOs designing meals to meet cultural needs? The referral form does not collect this type of information, and there doesn't seem to be any interaction with members before meals are delivered.

MCOs are working closely with food vendors and local community-based organizations to explore opportunities for greater cultural and dietary customization. Members can also communicate specific preferences or restrictions directly to the food provider during intake or follow-up.

18. Will all MCOs have a running list of available vendors on their websites?

Yes, MCOs plan to maintain an updated list of contracted food vendors on their websites to support provider and member awareness because they are not a part of the MCO network.

MCO Contact Information:

Blue Cross and Blue: 1-866-689-1523

support@virtualhp.com

[Medicaid | Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Mexico](#)

Molina Healthcare: 1-844-862-4543

molina_nm_foodismedicine@molinahealthcare.com

[Welcome to Molina Healthcare of New Mexico](#)

Presbyterian Health Plan: 1-505-923-2008

foodismedicine@phs.org

[Turquoise Care Medicaid | Presbyterian Health Plan, Inc.](#)

UnitedHealthcare: 1-877-236-0826

nm_healthequity@uhc.com

[New Mexico Medicaid Health Plans | UnitedHealthcare Community Plan](#)