



CENTER FOR FOOD SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Caring for Those in Quarantine

Arranging for the needs of quarantined individuals to be safely and understandably met—this short vignette is part of our “Virginia Food Systems and COVID-19 Story Collection Project” that aims to highlight, collect, and share stories of hope and resilience in our food system amidst the pandemic. Find out more about this project and view our entire series on [our website](#).

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In recent times, the term “quarantine” has been used synonymously with lockdown measures and state mandated stay-at-home orders. However, quarantine is usually the next step required after confirmation of a positive COVID test or following close contact with an infected individual to help prevent spreading the virus, per U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While an ill person was isolated in quarantine, accessing the necessary supplies and food for continued sustenance oftentimes became difficult, or was simply not feasible, during Virginia’s Coronavirus pandemic stay-at-home order.

In light of such challenges, food bank volunteers joined forces with healthcare professionals to help provide the essentials for those in need. The Blue Ridge Area Food Bank and three Shenandoah Valley-based healthcare facilities aimed to meet the needs of hungry neighbors in quarantine. When checking out of Augusta Health, Waynesboro Assessment Center, or Sentara RMH Medical Center to quarantine and await Coronavirus test results, patients who were designated as “financially vulnerable” were offered “shelf-stable” food items from the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank (WHSV, 2020).



Blue Ridge Area

FOOD BANK

Everyone should have enough to eat.



The “initial box of food provides staple food items along with educational information on self-quarantine and isolation,” said Patra Reed, Sentara RMH’s Regional Director (WHSV, 2020). _ Reed also said Sentara RMH is striving to serve a “culturally diverse population” in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, and the hospital’s service area, where more than 50 languages are spoken. (WHSV, 2020). The food bank provided printed instructional items in Spanish for the hospitals’ distribution because Spanish is the second most commonly spoken language in the area. During patient follow up, Sentara RMH Medical Center personnel also checked on patient’s further need for food assistance.



Photo Courtesy of Sentara

This initiative to connect recent hospital patients who were in need of food was made possible through a grant awarded by Sentara Healthcare and Optima Health to the Federation of Virginia Food Banks. For more information about the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, [visit their website](#). Click [here](#) for the food bank’s response to COVID-19 in their service area. This vignette was adapted from an original WHSV article from May 27, 2020.

References

WHSV. (2020, May 27). Food bank teams up with healthcare groups to provide for people in quarantine. Retrieved from: <https://www.wHSV.com/content/news/Food-bank-teams-up-with-healthcare-groups-to-provide-food-to-people-in-quarantine-570799741.html>