Food Is Medicine Programs Can Improve Health, Reduce Food Insecurity

Saria Lofton, University of Illinois, Chicago

From grocery store closures on the West and South sides, to pollution coupled with land and water shortages for Chicago’s urban farmers, to the growing racial wealth gap, often the burden of food insecurity falls on families of color.

The situation starkly contradicts the fundamental right to food, which includes access to nutritious and abundant food — a cornerstone for a fulfilling and healthy life. Thankfully, with a new administration in City Hall and a new policy proposal in Illinois that could expand food programs via Medicaid, there has never been a better time to improve access to food in our city.

At the core of this work should be the growing movement known as food is medicine.