



Bill to Ensure Plant-Based Meals for Patients In Hospitals & Inmates in Maryland Prisons, Along with Plant-based Nutrition Training



A large body of peer-reviewed research shows that the illnesses responsible for many hospital visits often can be prevented, treated, and even reversed with plant-based diets, which are low in saturated fat and cholesterol yet high in fiber, nutrients, and vitamins.



A PRACTICE GREENHEALTH PROGRAM

Of the approx. 35 hospital organizations in Maryland that are members of the Healthier Hospitals program, only 6 have voluntarily committed to the "Healthy Food" challenge initiated 8 years ago in 2012. The challenge calls for less meat on in-patient meals.

See the participating hospitals <http://www.healthierhospitals.org/about-hhi/participating-hospitals>

The 2020 New Health Standards for Prisons and Hospitals that calls for Plant-based Meals - introduced by Del. Terri Hill, MD as HB-819/[SB 768](#) will require:

- Hospitals to make plant-based meals available to all patients and all plant-based meals reflected on all in-patient menus
- Maryland prisons to provide plant-based meals at least one time per week, like a "Meatless Monday"
- Maryland prisons to provide 100% plant-based meals upon request by inmates who want plant-based meals served at all times, without the need for a doctors note or religious accommodation.
- Maryland Department of Health & Minority Health – Health Disparities to provide all healthcare providers with information on how to be trained in plant-based nutrition, plant-based prescriptions and "Lifestyle Medicine" which treats the whole person to reduce reliance on costly prescription drugs in order to reduce health care cost
- Requires Corizon Health, the third-party health care provided to all Maryland state prisons, to annually:
 - Report to MDHMHHD & the General Assembly the health status of all inmates individually & in the aggregate with changes in health;
 - Report on the training the Corizon healthcare providers receive each year in plant-based nutrition &

Heart Disease

#1 Cause of Death in Maryland

(MD Department of Health Oct 2017)

"In addition to providing evidence on the effectiveness and dramatic impact on heart disease, research continues to show that a plant-based diet reduces the risk of many forms of cancer, osteoporosis, chronic kidney disease, many digestive diseases including IBS as well as autoimmune diseases." from the Montefiore Medical Center website <https://www.montefiore.org>

Why MD Prisons?



- Approx. \$150 million per year in tax-payer dollars is spent on inmate healthcare (*Corizon Health has a \$680 million contract for 5 yrs*)
- Approx. 105,000 prescriptions per month are written for inmate illness
- Approx. 30% of inmate healthcare cost is on reversible chronic degenerative diseases
- Maryland inmates suffer from health disparities at a greater rate than the Maryland population
- Foodborne illness is 1 of the top inmate illnesses in Maryland Prisons

What this Bill Does

This bill is a simple yet science-based measure that will lead to improved health outcomes for patients in a hospital setting and inmates in prison while also providing substantial savings to the state in direct medical costs and indirect costs related to reduced work loss, disability, and premature death of state employees who receive hospital care. The bill also provides Corizon Health with new evidenced based 21st Century health care delivery tools (defined as "Lifestyle Medicine") that will ensure that the health outcomes of prison inmates is not worse than when they entered Maryland prisons, while also providing measures for accountability and transparency for those outcomes, which over time can result in lower cost to taxpayers for inmate health. The Maryland Plant-based Meal Bill is a win/win for patients, healthcare providers and taxpayers. (See the backside to learn more.)

For more info. Email: Jo@HealthyLawyers.org or call (602)326-8663

A Reversible Problem!

Maryland's diabetes epidemic: Approximately 623,041 people in Maryland, or 12.6% of the adult population, have diabetes. Of these, an estimated 156,000 have diabetes but don't know it, greatly increasing their health risk. In addition, 1,634,000 people in Maryland, 36.9% of the adult population, have prediabetes with blood glucose levels higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. This is true also for the inmate population.

\$6.5 billion in Maryland

Diabetes and prediabetes cost an estimated \$6.5 billion each year.



Studies have shown that a plant-based diet can greatly improve the body's ability to regulate glucose levels, which lowers or eliminates the need for insulin.⁷ If patients and inmates have access to healthy plant-based meals, hospitals and Maryland prisons can decrease the risk of Type 2 diabetes or help them reverse the disease if they already have it.

Support for Plant-Based Hospital Meals

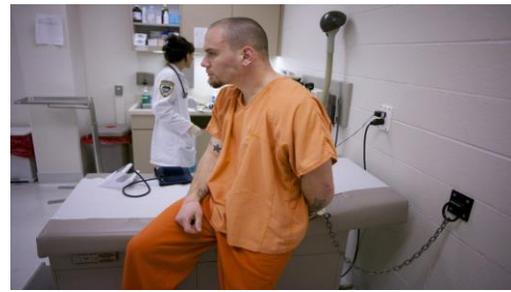
In June 2017, the American Medical Association passed the Healthy Food Options in Hospitals resolution, which "... calls on US hospitals to improve the health of patients, staff, and visitors by: (a) providing a variety of healthy food, including plant-based meals, and meals that are low in fat, sodium, and added sugars..."⁸

The American College of Cardiology made a similar recommendation in Planting a Seed: Heart-Healthy Food Recommendations for Hospitals: "A least one plant-based main dish that is low in fat, sodium, and added sugars will be offered and promoted at every meal..."⁹

St. Joseph Health System in Sonoma County, California, reports, "Vegetarian entrées cost about 50 percent less than meat entrées." The hospital projects saving \$5,000 a year by serving more meat-free meals.¹⁰

Endnotes

1. American Heart Association, <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/saturated-fats>
2. World Cancer Research Fund and American Institute for Cancer Research, "Diet, Nutrition, Physical Activity and Cancer: a Global Perspective," 2018, <https://www.wcrf.org/sites/default/files/Summary-third-expert-report.pdf>
3. National Kidney Foundation, <https://www.kidney.org/atoz/content/plant-based>
4. American Diabetes Association, <http://main.diabetes.org/dorg/PDFs/Advocacy/burden-of-diabetes/new-york.pdf>
5. McMacken Michelle and Sapana Shah, "A plant-based diet for the prevention and treatment of type 2 diabetes," Journal of Geriatric Cardiology, 2017 May, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5466941/>
6. American Medical Association, "Healthy Food Options in Hospitals," policy H-150.949.
7. American College of Cardiology, "Planting a Seed: Heart-Healthy Food Recommendations for Hospitals," <https://www.acc.org/membership/sections-and-councils/prevention-of-cardiovascular-disease-section/about-us/section-sub-groups/features/hospital-food-program>
8. Food Forward, "Moving Food Forward: A Win-Win Proposition," <https://forwardfood.org/s/UniversityFoodserviceProfessionals.pdf>



Corizon Prison Health Care Track Record

- 1,364 lawsuits against Corizon between 2009 & 2018 regarding poor inmate health care – See letter from Corizon CEO
<http://www.corizonhealth.com/Corizon-News/a-letter-to-d.c.-council-chairman-phil-mendelson>
- Corizon lost its contract with state of Arizona due to multi-million dollar poor health care lawsuit in 2014
- Around May 2019 – 200 letters by Arizona female inmates siting instances where women were miscarrying due to a lack of proper health care.
<https://www.themarshallproject.org/reports/131-corizon>

Legislation In Other States

Other states have passed similar bills:

CA - SB 1138 for prisons + hospitals
NY - S1471A/A4072 for hospitals
OR - HB 3342 for hospitals

Other prisons have gone plant-based:

AZ – Maricopa County 100% plant-based
NY – Ricker's Prison
PA – Philadelphia 2018 pilot program

Prison Report

A report on global prison populations, indicates that a plant-based diet has the effect of: (1) **cheaper prison administration** (plant-based diets are significantly cheaper than MDE-based diets [*MDE = meat/dairy/egg*]); (2) **better prisoner life expectancy** (vegans live longer; and a core prison performance metric is average life expectancy of prison populations); (3) **higher likelihood of rehabilitative/restorative outcomes** in prison populations (higher levels of socialization); (4) **lower medical costs** (vegans lead healthier lives)

<https://medium.com/veganchronicles/the-case-for-vegan-prisons-b9a34df816dc>