

Addressing Food Security: Better Together



Aetna Better Health® of Kansas

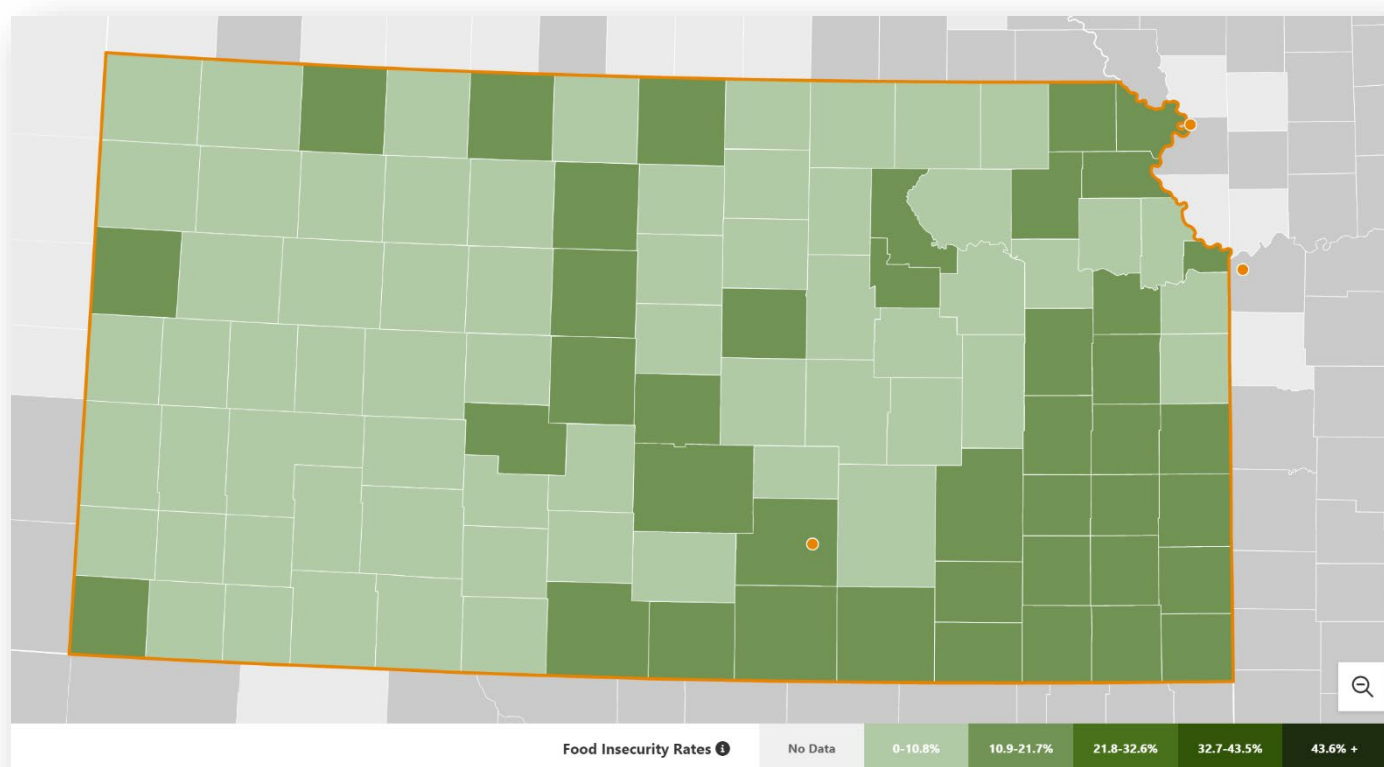
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Issue

Food Insecurity (FI) is defined as a person or family's inability to access healthy food resources as well as uncertainty about the availability of adequate food resources. People who experience food insecurity often worry about a lack of resources to get adequate food and may skip meals or eat smaller portions so that other family members may eat.^{1,2}

Although FI rates in Kansas have improved over the past several years (see line graph by top 10 counties), gaps remain. Data from Feeding America in 2020¹ (see Kansas map) shows that more than 40 counties in Kansas have an FI rate between 10.9% to 21.7%. In the map, darker colors represent counties with a greater FI score.

Food Insecurity among Overall (all Ages) Population in Kansas (2020)



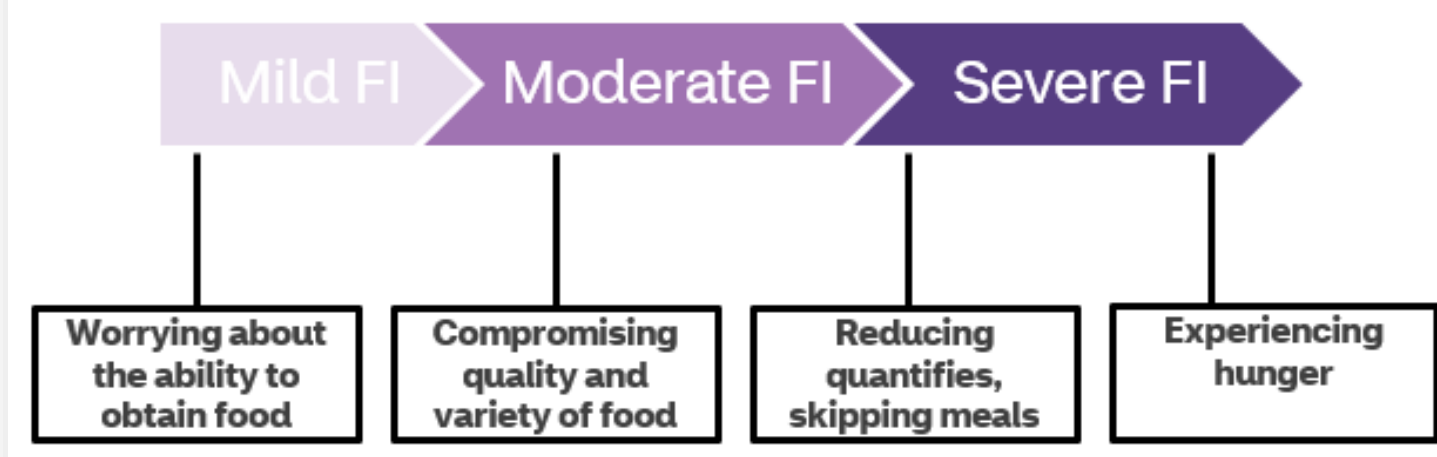
¹ USDA. "Definitions of Food Security." (2019). <https://ers.usda.gov>
² Leuna, C.W., et al. "Household Food Insecurity Is Positively Associated with Depression among Low-Income Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participants and Income-Eligible Nonparticipants." (2015). <https://www.doi.org>
³ Feeding America. "Food Insecurity among Overall (all ages) Population in Kansas." (2020). <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2020/overall/kansas>

Project

At Aetna Better Health of Kansas (ABH-KS), our approach to addressing food security is multifaceted, community-based and evolving. Components include:

- Data-driven partnerships with community organizations to ensure existing services and innovations are supported.
- Incentives for providers to report member's SDoH needs via ICD-10 Z-Codes.
- Collaboration with independent pharmacies to improve care and social supports through Care Management.
- A member webinar to help members make nutritious food choices.
 - Education on chronic disease management.
 - Contact info for Care Management & Member Services for assistance.
- A Food Insecurity Screening (FIS) via SMS or interactive voice response to identify members with FI and provide resource info and referrals. A follow up survey 3 months later ensures needs were met.

What Is Food Insecurity (FI)?



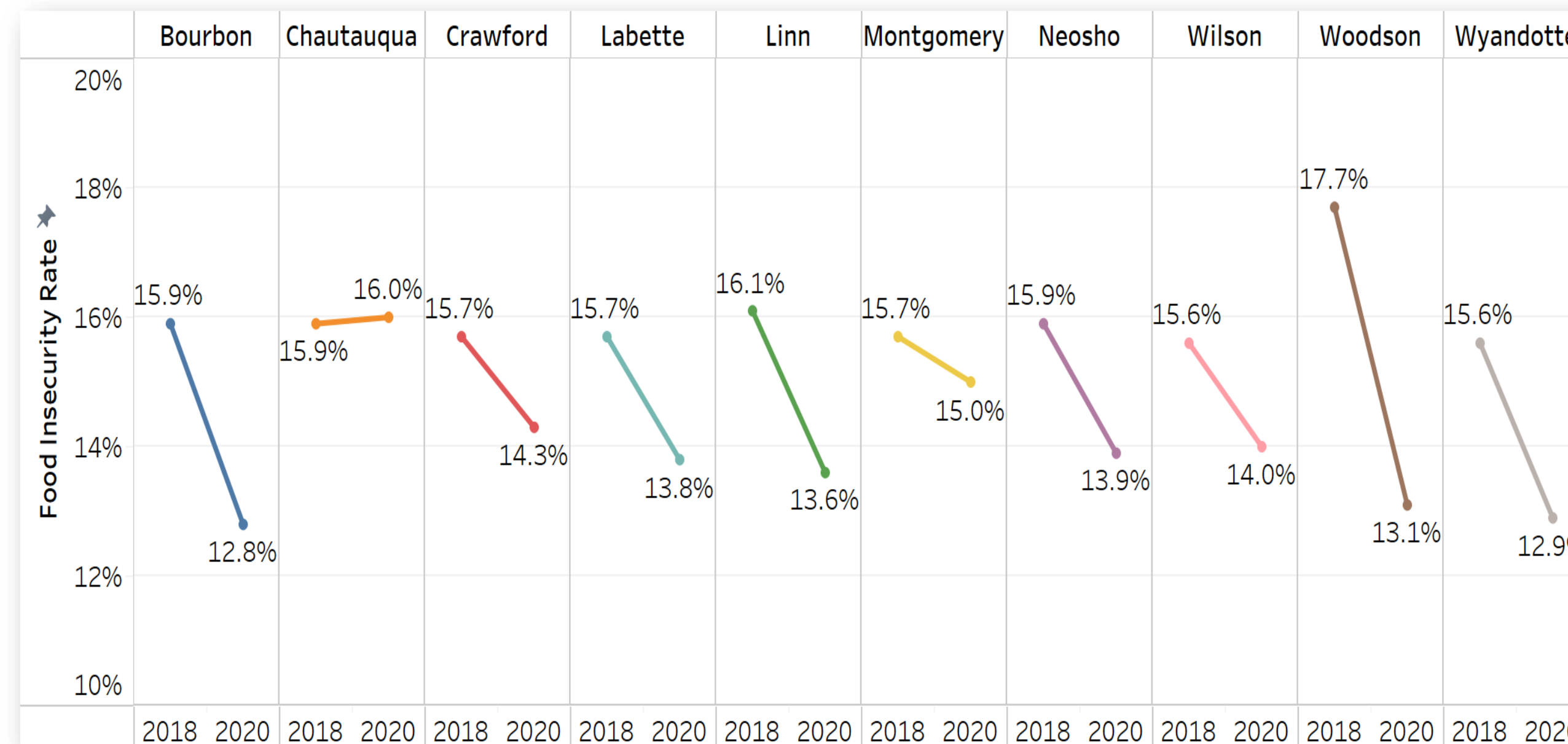
Results

While some of these efforts are new and data is still being collected, initial results are positive:

- 2,825 families received food distribution support in 2021.
- 208 individuals were assessed for social needs by our community pharmacy partners, 65.9% of whom reported issues with food security, allowing our care teams to offer support services.
- Pediatricians and family practitioners were identified as the provider types most likely to submit Z Codes.
- 59.5% of our members who have a Z-Code claim related to food insecurity are children 4 years old and younger



Feeding America – Change in Risk Scores by Top 10 Counties (2018 to 2020)



Lessons Learned

- Based on the data, additional effort and partnerships specifically devoted to child hunger are needed.
- Higher needs exist in frontier parts of Kansas.
- Community pharmacists are critical to supporting member care, especially in frontier and rural areas.
- Provider education on Z-Code utilization will increase the ability to identify and assist with FI as well as other SDoH.
- Partnering with community organizations such as County Health Departments & Food Banks has allowed Aetna to be a part of giving food directly to those in need.

Organization Information

Aetna Better Health of Kansas (ABHKS) serves approximately 145,000 Medicaid members as part of the KanCare program. ABHKS is part of Aetna Medicaid Administrators LLC (Aetna Medicaid), a CVS Health company, which has over 30 years of experience managing the care of the most medically vulnerable, using innovative approaches to achieve both successful health care results and effective cost outcomes.

For more information visit www.aetnabetterhealth.com/kansas

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