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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MetroPlusHealth Launches In-Lieu-of Services Medically Tailored Meals Pilot Program**

**The pilot program partners with God's Love We Deliver and NYC Health + Hospitals to provide Medically Tailored Meals to high-needs individuals**

**(New York, NY – July 12, 2022)** – One in three patients is hospitalized due to malnourishment, having lower quality of life and higher health care costs than nourished patients. On July 1, 2022, [MetroPlusHealth](#), New York City's high-quality and affordable health plan, introduced its In-Lieu-of Services Medically Tailored Meals (ILS-MTM) pilot program. The no-cost program is open to eligible members who are 18 years of age or older, on Medicaid (including Partnership in Care (PIC) and HARP), living with cancer, diabetes, heart failure, or HIV/AIDS, and have a certain number of inpatient hospital stays and/or emergency room visits within the last 12 months related to these conditions. It is also available to members who are currently receiving personal care services and wish to receive medically tailored meals (MTMs).

Through the ILS-MTM pilot program, qualifying members work with Registered Dietitian Nutritionists who design their menu and provide nutrition education and counseling. These meals are tailored to the member's specific health needs and can help them access nutritious meals. MetroPlusHealth's members can have up to three meals per day delivered to their homes for six months at a time and can continue receiving meals as long as they are eligible to participate in the program.

The partnership with [God's Love We Deliver](#) (GLWD) ensures that the medically tailored meals program is part of the continuum of health care, broadly accessible to those who need it, and always of the highest quality. GLWD serves in the space between hunger and health, and medically tailored meals provide a low-cost and high-impact intervention.

Food is medicine, and nutrition is integral to people's flourishing and managing diseases that threaten their health. It has been proven that members enrolled in MTMs shared that the meals helped them live more independently, helped them eat more nutritiously, and made their treatment more bearable. The impact of MTMs and meal delivery programs reduced

emergency department visits, ambulance use, hospital readmission, and overall health care spending.

"The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that from May 2021 to May 2022, food prices were the largest over-the-year increase in 43 years. Through our partnership with God's Love We Deliver and NYC Health + Hospitals, we are proud to offer our members meals designed to improve their health outcomes, lower the cost of care and increase patient satisfaction," **said Dr. Talya Schwartz, President and CEO of MetroPlusHealth.** "When the coronavirus pandemic first gripped New York City, New Yorkers experienced food insecurity and saw food prices increase. As the City eased out of the lockdown, the price of goods continued to rise. Access to nutritious meals is essential as it impacts physical and mental health."

"We're thrilled with our partnership with MetroPlusHealth, nourishing their members with our home-delivered medically tailored meals," **said Karen Pearl, President and CEO of God's Love We Deliver.** "Research demonstrates that Food is Medicine, and we look forward to providing this life-saving nutrition intervention to so many. Our delicious, individually-tailored meals will support MetroPlusHealth members' health and well-being, helping them stay out of hospitals and in their homes, improving their health outcomes and lowering the cost of their care."

"We are delighted that more NYC Health + Hospitals' patients will benefit from medically tailored meals through this evidence-based program," **said Dr. Nichola Davis, Chief Population Officer at NYC Health + Hospitals.** "We know that healthy food is essential to good health and are committed to helping New Yorkers remove unjust barriers to getting and staying healthy. It is exciting to see New York State take this important step to ensure that New Yorkers with the diet-related disease have enough nutritious food to support their health and well-being."

MetroPlusHealth members who want to enroll in the ILS-MTM pilot program can look out for a call from a representative. Joining the program is entirely up to the member. If a member decides not to join, it will not affect their Medicaid eligibility or benefits. For any questions, please call 1-800-3030-9626 (TTY: 711), Monday to Saturday, from 8 AM to 8 PM.

[Photos of meals.](#) Photo credits to Kerri Brewer and Lauren Radel for food styling.

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### **About MetroPlusHealth**

Since 1985, MetroPlus Health Plan has built a reputation for providing access to affordable, quality health care to residents across New York City. MetroPlusHealth is the plan of choice for over 600,000 New Yorkers and has a five-star rating based on the State's 2020 Consumer's Guide to Medicaid and Child Health Plus Managed Care Plans in New York City. The health plan's robust network of primary care doctors and specialists includes many independent community providers. Culturally sensitive, and fluent in more than 40 languages, MetroPlusHealth's staff is as diverse as the great City it serves. For more information about

MetroPlusHealth plans, benefits, and services, visit [www.metroplus.org](http://www.metroplus.org) and join the conversation at [facebook.com/metroplushealth](https://www.facebook.com/metroplushealth) and Twitter [@metroplushealth](https://twitter.com/metroplushealth). MetroPlusHealth is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation's largest public health system.