

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION ON FOOD, HEALTH, AND FLOURISHING: THE ROLE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS EDUCATION



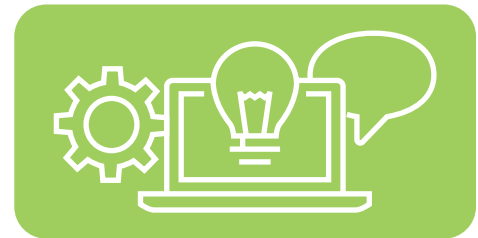
Wednesday, September 10, 2025 | 9:30 am - 12:00 pm Central Time
Hybrid Meeting: Minneapolis Marriott City Center and Zoom

Alongside its 2025 Annual Conference, the Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health (KNN) convened experts to discuss the intersection of food, health, and flourishing in relation to national issues. The aim was to consider the KNN's unique contribution to the conversation and brainstorm practical steps that can be taken in the immediate future.

Driving Questions

The following three questions guided the conversation:

1. What national issues intersect with food, health, and flourishing?
2. How can the KNN add unique value to these conversations?
3. What practical steps can we take now?



Historical and Educational Context

Concerns regarding food, health, and flourishing have increased in the past five years. Efforts have been driven, in part, by a congressional call for medical schools to offer nutrition education. H.Res. 1118 (2021-2022) "calls on medical schools, graduate medical education programs, and other health professional training programs to provide meaningful physician and health professional education on nutrition and diet." The bipartisan resolution was introduced in response to the health impacts and economic costs of American nutrition and in recognition of the limited amount of nutrition education in medical and health professions education.

Participants shared current publications and model approaches that followed H.Res. 1118:

- Eisenberg, D.M., Cole, A., Maile, E.J., Salt, M., Armstrong, E., Leib, E.B., Findley, T., Massa, J., Albin, J., Alston, M. and Barkoukis, H., 2024. Proposed nutrition competencies for medical students and physician trainees: a consensus statement. JAMA network open, 7(9), pp.e2435425-e2435425. [doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.35425](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.35425)
- AAMC published a [data snapshot of nutrition in medical education curricula](#) and found that while nutrition education is common, it is generally conducted through isolated modules rather than an integrated approach.
- The [Teaching Kitchen Collaborative](#) has become a model for developing nutrition education.
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has also partnered with the Culinary Institute of America to offer CME credits on nutrition science, healthcare, and the culinary arts through a program named "Healthy Kitchens, Healthy Lives."

Considerations and Challenges

Participants discussed a variety of considerations and challenges to potential approaches.

- The value of food has been diminished in a processed food environment. We should engage people in thinking about food from a values perspective with an effort of reducing food waste.

- It is important to find the ways people care about food and engage with them there. Reconnecting people to food through personal narratives and values is essential.
- We have a culture of discussing food in absolutist terms and could benefit from more moderate positions and language concerning healthy diets.
- Nutrition education should be grounded in science.
- There is significant food insecurity among medical students. Those with food security often face significant time constraints that make it difficult for them to consider their own nutritional needs.
- There are large ethical questions around access to food, such as SNAP restrictions, and considerations of personal versus social responsibility.

Examples of Successful Programs

The group discussed several local examples of successful programs addressing food and health in higher education, K-12 education, hospitals, and community efforts. A number of these examples are members of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative, indicating potential for emerging partnership.

- [Stanford Teaching Kitchen](#) – Member of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative
- [University of Utah Program Culinary Medicine](#) – Member of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative
- Northwell Health revamped hospital food service – Member of the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative
- [Kern Family Foundation-supported farm at ASU](#) focused on cultivating character through agriculture and food production
- Waste Watchers (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105109>)
- Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy opened a teaching kitchen as part of its Entrepreneurship and Sustainability program

Opportunities for KNN Engagement

Several ways for the KNN to contribute to efforts related to food, health, and flourishing were identified, including scholarly contributions and curriculum efforts.

- Apply to present at [Convening on Best Practices in Medical Nutrition Education](#) (April 28-29, 2026) co-sponsored by AAMC, NBME, and the Teaching Kitchen Collaborative. **Deadline: November 15, 2025.**
- Host a follow-up convening with key stakeholders and/or partners that have teaching kitchens.
- Develop demonstration projects to promote aligning nutrition education with the KNN Framework for Flourishing.
- Develop nutrition education modules.
- Amplify work that others are doing by gathering a collection of programs and research.

Food, Health, and Flourishing Meeting Participants

Ellie Bradish

Education Program Coordinator
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health
Office of the Provost
Office of the SVP for Strategic Academic Partnerships
Medical College of Wisconsin

Heather Carroll, PhD

Academic Writer
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health

Kimara Ellefson, MBA, EdD

National Director of Strategy and Partnerships
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health

Jeff Fritz, PhD

Associate Director
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health
Associate Professor
Medical College of Wisconsin

Rachel Hackbarth

Executive Assistant to Cheryl A. Maurana, PhD
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health
Medical College of Wisconsin

Anna Hassell, MA

Administrative Assistant, Sr.
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health

Aviad Haramati, PhD

Professor of Integrative Physiology
Co-Director of the Graduate Program in Integrative
Medicine & Health Sciences
Georgetown University Medical Center

Ryan Hollis

Administrative Associate to Kimara Ellefson, MBA, EdD
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health

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Cheryl A. Maurana, PhD

Founding Director
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health
Interim Provost
Stephen and Shelagh Roell Endowed Chair
Professor of Bioethics and Medical Humanities
SVP for Strategic Academic Partnerships
Medical College of Wisconsin

Sarah Ozurumba

Program Manager, KNN Learner Network
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health

Joon Shim, MD, MPH, FACS

Attending Surgeon
Bassett Healthcare Network

Samantha Simmons, MPH

Chief Executive Officer
Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine
and Health

Chris Stawski, PhD

Senior Program Director and Senior Fellow
Kern Family Foundation
Adjunct Assistant Professor
Medical College of Wisconsin

Angela Szasz, MHA

Project Manager
Office of the Provost
Office of the SVP for Strategic Academic Partnerships
Medical College of Wisconsin

Chris Wharton, PhD

Professor
College of Health Solutions
Arizona State University

Alicia Witten

Program Director
Kern National Network for Flourishing in Health
Office of the Provost
Office of the SVP for Strategic Academic Partnerships
Medical College of Wisconsin