



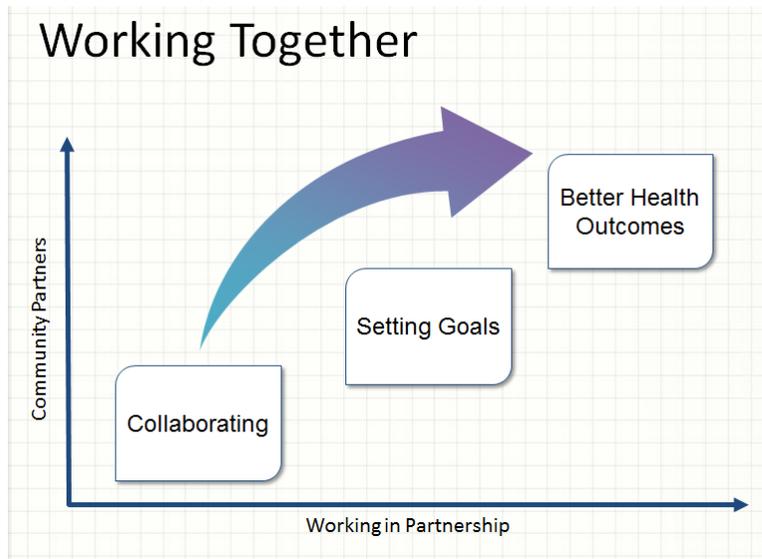
**ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY:
A BLUE PRINT FOR ACTION**



Let's Start the **CONVERSATION**

Atlantic City: a **CONVERSATION** for health

In 2015, the AtlantiCare Foundation was awarded funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation- New Jersey Health Initiatives to explore ways to make “the healthy choice the easy choice in Atlantic City.” As a result, CareAC, a community coalition, was formed to identify and impact health concerns for the City of Atlantic City. CareAC started the **CONVERSATION** for health by assembling a cross-sector coalition of residents, businesses and organizations representing the health, education and social service fields to address barriers to health.



CareAC... making the healthy choice the easy choice in Atlantic City

CareAC is comprised of an inter-agency steering committee, and a larger coalition of several community non-profits and service organizations.

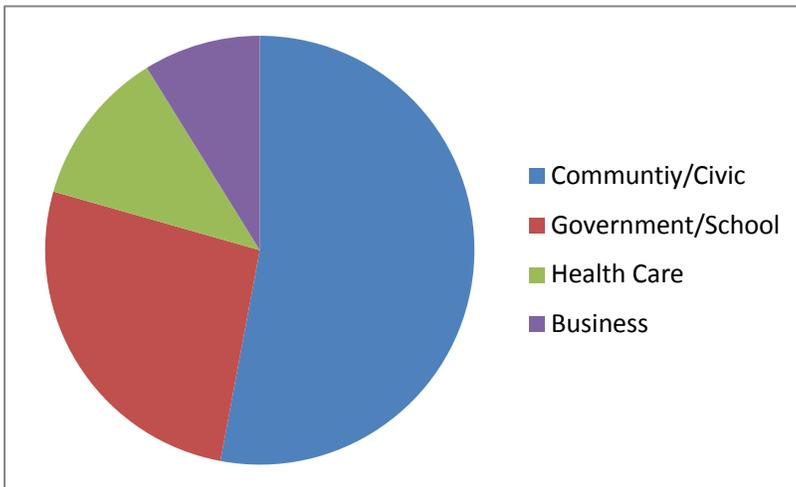
Community Partners

A Work in Progress Foundation
AC Youth in Motion
Atlantic City Board of Education
Atlantic City Health Department
Atlantic City Housing Authority
Atlantic City Police Department
Atlantic City Recreation Department
Atlantic City Tourism District
AtlantiCare
Bass Pro Shops
Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City
CASA for Children
Cedar Food Market
Chelsea Neighborhood Association
Coalition of Safer Communities
Community Food Bank of NJ
Connecting the Dots, Inc.

Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA
Family Service Association
Fellowship of Churches
Gateway Community Action Partnership
Growing Green AtlantiCare
Jewish Family Services
Police Athletic League
Robins Nest, Inc. Organization
Rutgers University - SNAP-Ed
Seeds of Hope
Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inc.
Spanish Community Center
Stockton University
Tanger Outlets
The City of Atlantic City
Venice Park Civic Association
Vision 2000 CDC

Our individual agencies are doing
great work

Collectively we can make a
GREATER IMPACT



CareAC Steering Committee

Merydawilda Colon, Stockton University
Samantha Kiley, AtlantiCare Foundation
Marcia McCulley, AtlantiCare Foundation
Sharon Simon, Jewish Family Services
Eddie Tate, AtlantiCare
Tracey Triniwell, Boys and Girls Club
Christine Zellers, Rutgers SNAP-Ed

CareAC... making the healthy choice the easy choice in Atlantic City

Atlantic City, New Jersey:

The City of Atlantic City is located in Atlantic County, which is one of 21 counties in New Jersey. It is located in the southeastern corridor of the State. Atlantic City is part of the 8.1 mile long Absecon Island, along with Ventnor City, Margate and Longport. Atlantic City is a socioeconomically and ethnically diverse community, with urban neighborhoods, a seasonal beach and bay district and a city in turmoil with recent casino closings due to economic downturn.

According to United States Census Bureau figures, there are just over 39,000 people and 15,847 family households in Atlantic City. There are hundreds of different languages spoken in the City, and in fact, the school district recently added to their staff a case worker who speaks over 40 languages to meet the needs of the many diverse families who attend their schools. The most common languages other than English are Spanish, Bengali, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Cantonese, Mandarin and Gujarati. The racial makeup of Atlantic City is Black (38%), Hispanic or Latinos (30%), White (26%), and Asian (15%) making up the majority of the community. The median family income has decreased to \$26,936 – more than \$45,000 below the State average with 35.8% of persons living below the poverty level (compared to 11.1% on the State level).

According to the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 17% of Atlantic County residents report having poor or fair health and 18% report being uninsured. Atlantic County ranks 18th out of the 21 New Jersey counties. Being that Atlantic City is the most diverse community in Atlantic County with the greatest needs, it can be assumed that these percentages may be even greater in the City of Atlantic City.

Atlantic City's multi-cultural characteristics bring unique healthcare needs and challenges and they are as diverse as the people residing in the City – whether it is serving families with young children, active adults in the prime of their life, or older residents who may be facing age-related issues or living with chronic diseases. Although diversity may bring challenges, it is important to note that such diversity is looked at as a valued community resource by proud Atlantic City citizens who truly care for their community.

In addition to economic challenges, many residents of Atlantic City face health disparities which disproportionately increase their likelihood for chronic conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. These diseases are debilitating and can negatively impact one's quality of life. Poor nutrition and the lack of fresh and healthy foods are root causes associated with many chronic conditions. Fresh and healthy foods are nutrient dense and provide the body with much needed vitamins and minerals to prevent illness and manage disease. Deemed a food desert, until recently, Atlantic City was without a proper grocery store within its City limits, and even now offers limited food choices in its corner and convenience stores. As a result, Atlantic City residents have issues associated with hunger and food insecurity, as well as inadequate access to healthy foods. This lack of food and access to healthy and fresh foods directly corresponds to the City's high incidence of diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity among its residents, and impacts the health of the City's youth.

The beginning of an important **CONVERSATION**: CareAC was charged with reviewing the current health status of residents in Atlantic City, and to work as a team to address barriers to health. Conversations result in commitment by making health a shared value. Collectively the group reviewed the socio-economic and health data associated with the City of Atlantic City and looked at health indicators and lifestyle behaviors that present a barrier to health.

[← Back To Map](#)

Select a Ranking:

HEALTH OUTCOMES
OVERALL RANK 

Rank	County
1	Hunterdon (HT)
2	Morris (MR)
3	Somerset (SO)
4	Bergen (BE)
5	Sussex (SU)
6	Middlesex (MI)
7	Monmouth (MO)
8	Union (UN)
9	Burlington (BU)
10	Warren (WA)
11	Ocean (OC)
12	Hudson (HU)
13	Mercer (ME)
14	Passaic (PA)
15	Cape May (CM)
16	Gloucester (GL)
17	Salem (SA)
18	Atlantic (AT)
19	Camden (CA)
20	Essex (ES)
21	Cumberland (CU)

Atlantic (AT)

Show areas to explore Show areas of strength

County Demographics +

	Atlantic County	Trend 	Error Margin	Top U.S. Performers^	New Jersey	Rank (of 21)
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Health Outcomes 18

Length of Life 19

Premature death	7,800		7,500-8,200	5,200	5,500
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Quality of Life 16

Poor or fair health**	17%		17-17%	12%	16%
Poor physical health days**	3.7		3.6-3.8	2.9	3.2
Poor mental health days**	3.7		3.6-3.8	2.8	3.4
Low birthweight	9%		8-9%	6%	8%

Additional Health Outcomes (not included in overall ranking) +

Health Factors 19

Health Behaviors 19

Adult smoking**	19%		18-19%	14%	15%
Adult obesity	27%		25-29%	25%	25%
Food environment index	6.7			8.3	8.2

Physical inactivity	26%		24-28%	20%	24%
Access to exercise opportunities	90%			91%	95%
Excessive drinking**	18%		17-18%	12%	17%
Alcohol-impaired driving deaths	26%		22-29%	14%	26%
Sexually transmitted infections	462.9			134.1	319.6
Teen births	32		30-33	19	20

Additional Health Behaviors (not included in overall ranking) +

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Clinical Care 16

Uninsured	18%		16-19%	11%	15%
Primary care physicians	1,320:1			1,040:1	1,170:1
Dentists	1,860:1			1,340:1	1,220:1
Mental health providers	850:1			370:1	570:1
Preventable hospital stays	62		59-64	38	55
Diabetic monitoring	84%		81-87%	90%	84%
Mammography screening	62%		59-65%	71%	61%

Additional Clinical Care (not included in overall ranking) +

Social & Economic Factors 20

High school graduation	85%			93%	88%
Some college	57%		54-59%	72%	66%
Unemployment	10.4%			3.5%	6.6%
Children in poverty	24%		20-27%	13%	16%
Income inequality	4.8		4.6-5.1	3.7	5.1
Children in single-parent households	41%		39-44%	21%	30%
Social associations	8.8			22.1	8.3
Violent crime	499			59	302
Injury deaths	67		62-71	51	42

Additional Social & Economic Factors (not included in overall ranking) +

Physical Environment 6

Air pollution - particulate matter	11.2			9.5	11.3
Drinking water violations	No			No	
Severe housing problems	26%		24-27%	9%	23%
Driving alone to work	77%		75-78%	71%	72%
Long commute - driving alone	28%		26-29%	15%	42%

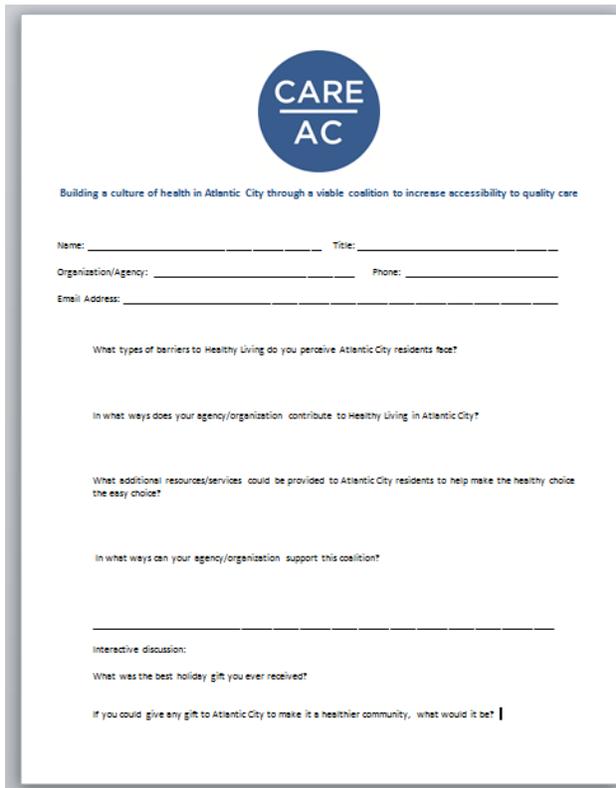
2016

^ 10th/90th percentile, i.e., only 10% are better.

Note: Blank values reflect unreliable or missing data

** Data should not be compared with prior years due to changes in definition/methods

Information is the highway to health. To determine barriers to health and available resources our partners joined forces to provide input via a questionnaire.



The image shows a questionnaire form for CARE AC. At the top center is the CARE AC logo, which consists of a blue circle containing the text 'CARE' above 'AC'. Below the logo is the mission statement: 'Building a culture of health in Atlantic City through a viable coalition to increase accessibility to quality care'. The form includes several sections with horizontal lines for text entry: 'Name: _____ Title: _____', 'Organization/Agency: _____ Phone: _____', and 'Email Address: _____'. There are four open-ended questions: 'What types of barriers to Healthy Living do you perceive Atlantic City residents face?', 'In what ways does your agency/organization contribute to Healthy Living in Atlantic City?', 'What additional resources/services could be provided to Atlantic City residents to help make the healthy choice the easy choice?', and 'In what ways can your agency/organization support this coalition?'. Below these questions is a section for 'Interactive discussion' with two more questions: 'What was the best holiday gift you ever received?' and 'If you could give any gift to Atlantic City to make it a healthier community, what would it be? |

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- The image shows a summary of agency input. At the top center is the CARE AC logo. Below the logo is the heading 'We sought agency input on:'. This is followed by a bulleted list of four items: 'Barriers to healthy living', 'Services provided by agency', 'Needed resources to address barriers', and 'Support the organization could offer to CareAC'.
- Barriers to healthy living
 - Services provided by agency
 - Needed resources to address barriers
 - Support the organization could offer to CareAC

Input from over three dozen civic and community organizations provided insight on what they regard as the most pressing issues. Statistics are great, but it is imperative to hear from agencies and community members - those with feet on the street, what they deem the most pressing issues facing Atlantic City.

A snapshot of their responses yielded the following barriers to health:

- Lack of access to healthy foods and beverage choices
- Safe play spaces
- Education for healthy living
- Poverty
- Cultural division
- Education
- Communication
- Stress reduction
- Access to fitness
- Negative Community Perception
- Resource connectivity at health care visits

These responses laid the foundation for working toward our Blue Print for Action.

CareAC... making the healthy choice the easy choice in Atlantic City

Early successes from effective CONVERSATIONS and collaboration.

We fortified our foundation by utilizing our partnerships to accomplish early successes to solidify the strength of our relationships, including:

- Purchase of a produce refrigerator for the Community Food Bank branch servicing Atlantic City residents.
- Creation of ThisisAC - a community multi-pronged social media movement with a mission to highlight the beauty of Atlantic City
- Introduced a Corner Store Initiative, utilizing multi-sector organizations
- Hosted Atlantic City Nutrition Forum with USDA and community partners to address summer feeding
- Community Food Bank of New Jersey Mobile Food Bank partnership with AtlantiCare to provide food to our underserved population while providing medical awareness
- Successful audience with State Senator James Whelan and letter of support for initiatives

Moving data to action

In its inaugural year, CareAC has elevated nutrition and physical activity as health priorities for the City of Atlantic City, as these behaviours have the ability to prevent, delay, and reduce the impact of chronic conditions.

Good nutrition and regular physical activity is the cornerstone of health. Environmental factors play a major role in influencing health. Atlantic City residents are limited on where they can purchase fresh fruits and vegetables and physical activity opportunities are restricted due to lack of offerings and/or resources. It is critically important to address these factors to improve nutrition and physical activity levels and ultimately address their impact on health. By focusing on nutrition and physical activity, our efforts have the ability to impact several health conditions at the same time (i.e. co-morbid chronic conditions including diabetes, heart disease, depression) while at the same time laying the ground work to prevent future generations from getting these diseases.

The Goals of the Blueprint will be activated through the offering of Mini-Grants.

To provide funding to advance CareAC's Blue Print for Action, mini-grants will be offered to agencies to start addressing the need. To be eligible for funding, agencies serving Atlantic City residents must work in collaboration with at least one other group to enhance the nutrition and/or physical activity of those they serve and must impact a policy, system, or environmental change to ensure long term sustainability. Working in collaboration will create synergy, improve upon relationships, eliminate duplication of effort and continue to underscore the importance of working as a coalition.

CareAC: Blue Print for Action

OVERALL GOAL I: NUTRITION

Create access to healthy foods in Atlantic City.

Healthy food is essential for good health and well-being. A poor diet and limited access to healthy foods increases risk factors for chronic disease. All activities listed below were identified with the outcome of increased access and demand for healthy foods- including fruits and vegetables.

BOLD ACTION STEPS

1. Leverage Partnerships to Expand Healthy Feeding Opportunities

Measure: number of identified partnerships and sites

Goal year 1: Increase participation of Atlantic City youth in summer feeding program

Indicators of Success: Informational Sessions Held, at least 1 new sponsor and 10 sites established

Accountable Partners: Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Community Food Bank, and AtlantiCare

Goal years 2-3: Build upon relationships and initiate a Healthy AC Summit

Indicators of Success: Continued growth of summer feeding program to have new sponsors and feeding sites established with the hopes of 40% of eligible children are able to be fed. Summit held to identify opportunity to address ongoing feeding needs in the City of Atlantic City

Accountable Partners: Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Community Food Bank, Jewish Family Services and AtlantiCare

2. Corner Store Initiative Collaboration to Expand Healthy Food Selection in Corner Stores

Measure: number of stores that participate

Goal year 1: Participation of 7 stores

Indicators of Success: 7 stores participate and at least 2 partners identify ways to promote healthy items available at Corner Stores in Atlantic City

Accountable Partners: Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Cape Cumberland YMCA, AtlantiCare

Goal years 2-3: Re-evaluate program and seek opportunities for expansion to additional stores and partners. **Indicators of Success:** 2 additional stores/ partners and a consistent promotional opportunity to collectively support corner stores

Accountable Partners: Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Cape Cumberland YMCA, AtlantiCare, Jewish Family Services

3. Expand School and Community Garden projects

Measure: number of gardens established

Goal year 1: Identify and implement at least 1 additional garden

Indicators of Success: Garden site identified and garden growing

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Work in Progress Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City

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Goal years 2-3: Re-evaluate programming and seek opportunities for expansion to include an additional partner for garden maintenance. Develop a youth summer program to support garden maintenance.

Indicators of Success: Community partners identified for garden maintenance and support. Summer Youth program established.

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Work in Progress Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City

4. Expand Nutrition and Healthy Food Preparation Education

Measure: number of programs offered

Goal year 1: Expand offered programs via youth and senior groups/ services

Indicator of Success: At least 3 new sites to provide educational programs

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, PALS, Rutgers-SNAP Ed, Jewish Family Services, Vision 2000

Goal years 2-3: identify sites for classes, expand programming and increase services

Indicator of Success: Inventory complete and site listing prepared to include at least 10 opportunities to learn how to prepare healthy foods.

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Richard Stockton University, Rutgers-SNAP Ed,

5. Implement Provider-directed Fruit and Veggie Prescription Program

Measure: Prescription sheets being utilized by local Atlantic City based providers

Goal year 1: Prescriptions are developed with key scripting, 1 clinical partner identified

Indicator of Success: Clinical partners utilizing produce script pads.

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Jewish Family Services

Goal years 2-3: at least 2 clinical partners utilize prescriptions

Indicator of Success: Clinical partners utilizing produce script pads.

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Rutgers- SNAP Ed, Jewish Family Services, and Southern Jersey Family Medicine

OVERALL GOAL II: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Promote positive behaviors that increase physical activity in Atlantic City.

Physical activity is essential to a healthy lifestyle. Physical activity is a measure that improves health and reduces preventable risks associated with several health conditions. All activities listed below where to create and maintain safe and affordable places to be physically activity in the Atlantic City.

BOLD ACTION STEPS

1. Advocate for Physical Activity Opportunities

Measure: number of existing and new physical activity opportunities

Goal year 1: Inventory physical activity opportunities and provide a directory

Indicator of Success: Inventory complete and directory created

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, # Thisis AC, Richard Stockton University

Goal years 2-3: increase opportunities for physical activities

Indicator of Success: Establish at least 3 city-wide endeavors to promote physical activities

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Richard Stockton University, #This is AC

2. Receive Designation as a Playful City USA for 2017

Measure: secure designation

Goal year 1: research viability, secure partners, apply

Indicator of Success: Application Complete

Accountable Partners: Rutgers SNAP-Ed, The City of Atlantic City, # This is AC

Goal years 2-3: Promote designation once obtained

Indicator of Success: Designation obtained

Accountable Partners: Rutgers SNAP-Ed, The City of Atlantic City, # This is AC

3. Designate Wellness Ambassadors

Measure: number of Wellness Ambassadors

Goal year 1: establish criteria for Wellness Ambassadors and identify participants

Indicator of Success: Criteria established, and ambassadors identified

Accountable Partners: Rutgers SNAP-Ed, AtlantiCare, # This is AC, Jewish Family Services

Goal years 2-3: evaluate program and make annual opportunity for recognition

Indicator of Success: Annually Ambassadors identified

Accountable Partners: Stockton University, Rutgers SNAP-Ed, Boys and Girls Club of Atlantic City, Jewish Family Services, City of Atlantic City, AtlantiCare

OVERALL GOAL III:

Continue to monitor health barriers in Atlantic City and identify opportunities for improvement.

BOLD ACTION STEPS

1. Continue to Work with Stakeholders and Community Partners to Determine Health Barriers

Measure: Opportunities established to engage in city wide, interagency dialogue and collaboratively address additional health concerns for the City of Atlantic City

Goal year 1: Identify additional resident health concerns and barriers via the facilitation of a health survey for City residents.

Indicator of Success: Survey Complete and data collected and shared.

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare

Goal years 2-3: Establish quarterly city-round tables with health information and topics to be shared

Indicators of Success: Expansion of blue print to include additional city-wide health concerns and strategies to address

Accountable Partners: AtlantiCare, Rutgers SNAP-Ed, Jewish Family Services, and additional Coalition participating agencies

MOVING THE FORWARD

A number of development projects will bring new groups to the City and opportunities to promote a healthier mindset and lifestyle. We will utilize the partnerships formed through CareAC to create a healthy Atlantic City “Welcome Kit” for new and current audiences. The Kit will include materials for healthier options, such as a shopping choices, restaurants and locations for physical activity. Our efforts will help the community navigate Atlantic City with a focus on health – *making the healthy choice the easy choice*.

Keep the **CONVERSATION** going ... Looking to the Future

While CareAC has the foundation in place to work collaboratively to promote health and wellness, we may not be able to address every community need identified in our meetings or through health statistics. To bridge this gap, CareAC will continue to support and foster relationships with agencies and community partners that offer assistance to Atlantic City residents. We will act as the facilitator of time, talent and resources and keep the partners working in unison to address the needs of Atlantic City. In addition, through this Blue Print, we will continue to monitor activities that address the community’s needs and readjust planned activities when necessary. The coalition is focused and energized to expand our work into bigger community issues.

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AtlantiCare Growing Green
 Page Liked - March 18 - 🌱

Members of AtlantiCare and Care AC Coalition met with State Senator James Whelan to inform him of their progress to make the healthy choice the easy choice in Atlantic City. The group is working on initiatives to address Physical Activity and Nutrition, including the Healthy Corner Store initiative they are spearheading in Atlantic City. #NJHICollectivePower

Pictured from left to right: Senator Whelan; Marcia McCulley, AtlantiCare; Christine Zellers, Rutgers SNAP-Ed; Frank Blee, AtlantiCare; Raquel Yuhas, AtlantiCare; and David Calderetti, Cumberland Cape Atlantic YMCA.

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👤 Janet Dilks, Rose Riverso Farnan and 12 others

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