

MEETING COLLEGE STUDENTS' EVERYDAY NEEDS

Survey Findings From ECMC Foundation's Basic Needs Initiative

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Forty-seven postsecondary institutions that partner with the ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative grantees responded to the evaluation survey in spring 2021. Based on survey responses from these institutions, we found the following key takeaways.**
- Institutions provided a wide variety of basic needs services, the most common being food assistance. However, institutions with a greater proportion of students of color were less likely to provide basic needs services.
- Key partners in implementing basic needs services included campus leadership, counselors/advisors, the dean of students, community-based organizations, and funders.
- Institutions were most likely to receive support with networking and collaboration from the ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative grantees.
- Staffing basic needs services and sustaining funding were large challenges. Institutions in cities were more likely to cite staffing as a large challenge, and minority-serving and rural institutions were more likely to cite funding as a large challenge.
- About 40 percent of postsecondary institutions indicated they had fully implemented basic needs services. These institutions described basic needs services that were fully integrated into campus culture and services, highly accessible, centralized, and delivered by trained staff members who worked individually with students to provide comprehensive support and used data for continuous improvement.

Basic needs¹ insecurity among college students is a pressing issue that has become increasingly visible during the global pandemic. The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice found that in fall 2020 three in five college students experienced food insecurity, housing insecurity, and/or homelessness.² Meeting college students' basic needs is essential to their well-being and academic success (Daugherty et al., 2016; Goldrick-Rab, 2021; Haskett et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2017; Trawver et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2018).

In early 2020, the ECMC Foundation launched the Basic Needs Initiative (BNI) and funded seven organizations across the United States to further the development of basic needs services at two-year and four-year colleges and universities. Information about grantees can be found in appendix A. The ECMC Foundation also funded a learning partner, Education Northwest, to lead an evaluation of the BNI and facilitate a learning community for the grantees.

In this second evaluation brief, we present findings from a survey of postsecondary institutions that partnered with five of the BNI grantees. This brief is guided by the following questions:

- 1. Among ECMC Foundation BNI grantees (hereafter “grantees”), what basic needs services are partner institutions (hereafter “institutions”) providing to their students?**
- 2. Who are key partners in implementing basic needs services? How are grantees increasing institutions’ capacity to meet the basic needs of students?**
- 3. What implementation challenges do institutions experience?**
- 4. What constitutes fully implemented basic needs services?**

To address these questions, in spring 2021 we administered a survey to 75 postsecondary institutions in Arkansas, Alabama, California, Michigan, and Washington that work in partnership with five grantees: Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC), Auburn University’s Hunger Solutions Institute, John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY), Michigan Community College Association (MCCA), and United Way of King County (UWKC).

¹ Basic needs are “An ecosystem that supports financial stability by ensuring equitable access to nutritious and sufficient food; safe, secure, and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); healthcare to promote sustained mental and physical well-being; affordable transportation; resources for personal hygiene care; and emergency needs for students with dependents” (University of California, 2020).

² Based on survey responses from over 195,000 students from 130 two-year colleges and 72 four-year colleges and universities who responded to the 2020 #RealCollege Survey (The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, 2021).

Forty-seven institutions responded for a response rate of 63 percent.

On average, institutions that responded to the survey had similar characteristics (based on data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System [IPEDS]) to institutions that did not respond, except responding institutions were more likely to be suburban than nonresponding institutions (see table B1 in appendix B). Details about survey administration and analysis are in appendix B.

In this brief, we describe findings related to what basic needs services responding institutions provided to students; implementation partners and supports provided by grantees; implementation challenges; and the characteristics of basic needs services at the planning, early implementation, and full implementation stages.

Characteristics of 47 institutions that responded to survey

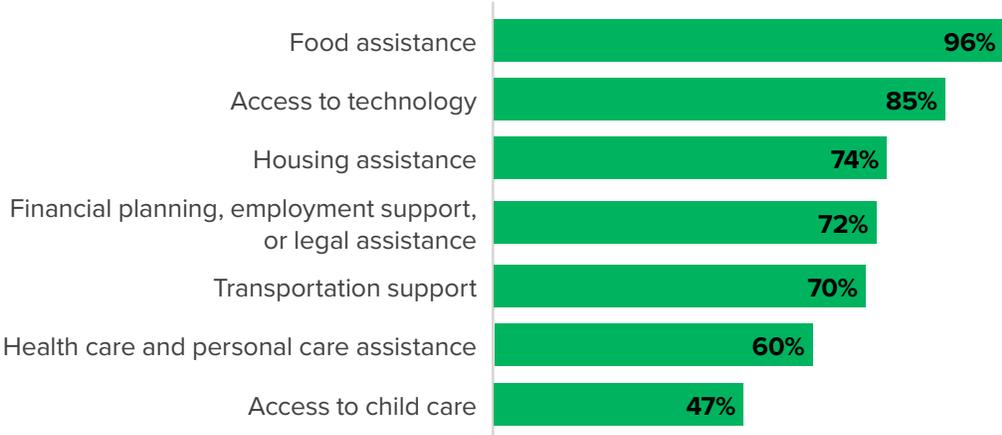
Minority-serving institution	43%
Average students of color	53%
Average students who received Pell	34%
Located in city	38%
Located in suburb	30%
Located in town	11%
Located in rural area	21%
Four-year public	43%
Four-year private	2%
Two-year public	55%

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

Basic needs service provision

Postsecondary institutions provide a wide variety of basic needs services, the most common being food assistance

Figure 1. Percentage of postsecondary institutions that provided each type of basic needs service in spring 2021



Note: Based on survey responses from 47 institutions. Complete findings are in table C1 in appendix C.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Food assistance. Nearly all responding institutions (45 of 47; 96%) reported providing food assistance. Of these institutions, many provided a food pantry (96%), help applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; 78%), or emergency funds for food (71%).

Access to technology. A large majority of the institutions (40 of 47; 85%) reported providing access to technology. Of these institutions, most offered a loaned or gifted digital device (95%), loaned or gifted WiFi hot spots (85%), and expanded WiFi service around campus (75%).

Housing assistance. Three-quarters of the institutions (35 of 47; 75%) reported providing housing assistance. Of these institutions, the majority provided emergency funds for housing (83%), help with finding housing (81%), and assistance with utilities (69%). Half of these institutions provided help applying for subsidized housing or hotel/motel vouchers.

Financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance. Nearly three-quarters of the institutions (34 of 47; 72%) reported providing financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance. Of these institutions, most offered help with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or other financial aid applications (91%), financial planning or financial literacy classes or workshops (85%), and the SNAP Employment and Training program (74%). It was less common for institutions to provide legal assistance or support applying for unemployment benefits (38% and 21% of the institutions, respectively).

Transportation assistance. The majority of the institutions (33 of 47; 70%) reported providing transportation assistance, which could include stipends, gas cards, and bus passes.

Health care and personal care assistance. The majority of the institutions (28 of 47; 60%) reported providing assistance with health and personal care. Of these institutions, the majority offered mental health services (86%) and hygiene supplies (75%).

Child care. Among the seven large categories of services, child care was the least commonly provided. Forty-seven percent of institutions (22 of 47) offered access to child care.

Postsecondary institutions with a greater proportion of students of color were less likely to provide basic needs services

Using data from our survey and from IPEDS, we explored the relationship between institutional characteristics and the provision of basic needs services in spring 2021.³ In our sample, the percentage of students of color at an institution was associated with a small decrease in the overall count of basic needs services provided (see table C2 in appendix C). We also found that institutions with a higher proportion of students of color were slightly less likely to provide food and housing assistance. A 1 percentage-point increase in students of color at an institution was related to a 0.7 percentage-point decrease in the likelihood of providing food assistance and a 1.3 percentage-point decrease in the likelihood of providing housing assistance; these findings were statistically significant at the 5 percent level. (The percentage of students of color at an institution was also negatively related to providing all other services, but these findings were only marginally significant at the 10 percent level or not statistically significant.)

Prior research suggests that students of color are more likely to attend lower-cost postsecondary institutions that typically have smaller overall budgets and lower spending (Garcia, 2018). However, for the institutions that responded to our survey, the association between percentage of students of color and provision of basic needs services did not appear to be driven by college resources. After we accounted for measures of college resources,⁴ the percentage of students of color was still associated with a small decrease in the provision of basic needs services. There was also no relationship between the percentage of students of color at an institution and the implementation stage of basic needs services, meaning that these results were not driven by low implementation levels. We will continue to investigate why there might be a relationship between the percentage of students of color at an institution and provision of basic needs services throughout this evaluation.

³ Our analysis included the sample of 45 institutions who responded to the survey and were not missing values for IPEDS data.

⁴ The regression model accounts for total cost (published in-state tuition and fees), the average price paid by the average full-time student (average net price), total revenue (tuition, grants, gifts, endowments, government appropriations, and other sources), and total spending on student services.

On the other hand, minority-serving institutions (MSIs) were more likely to provide access to child care, and institutions with a higher proportion of students receiving Pell Grants were more likely to provide housing assistance and financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance. MSIs are more likely than non-MSIs to serve students who are parents, perhaps in part because many students who are parents are also students of color (Li, 2007; Ryberg et al., 2021). Similarly, institutions with more low-income students may be more likely to provide basic needs services.

Implementation partners and support

Key college partners include campus leadership, counselors, advisors, and the dean of students; external partners include community-based organizations and funders

A majority of the institutions reported that key college partners in implementing basic needs services were campus leadership (87%), counselors/advisors (85%), and the dean of students (77%). Over two-thirds (68%) reported that faculty members were key partners. Faculty partners were commonly in social work or the field of social sciences; other disciplines included nutrition or public health, workforce or career and technical education, or the humanities. Over half of the institutions (53%) cited student associations as key partners. Student associations varied across campuses, ranging from student government, clubs, affinity groups, and Greek life. Less than half of the institutions reported that institutional research (38%), the student health center (30%), student resource centers (30%), and the board of trustees (21%) were key partners.

Most institutions identified community-based organizations (94%) and foundations or individual donors (80%) as key external partners. The least commonly selected external partner was an evaluator: Only 9 percent of the institutions reported working closely with an evaluator (see table C3 in appendix C).

We found alignment between survey findings related to key partners and the institutions' leading strategies for implementing basic needs services. When identifying their top three strategies for implementation, most institutions selected campus resources and funding (83%), partnerships with community-based organizations (57%), and campus leadership support (54%; see table C4 in appendix C).

"[What has been most helpful about the support from UWKC is] AmeriCorps Associates who are assigned to our campus for one year. They work full time and provide amazing services to our students! The other is [UWKC] connecting the Benefits Hub with community-based organizations that provide training for programs that address the basic needs of our students."

—Washington community college

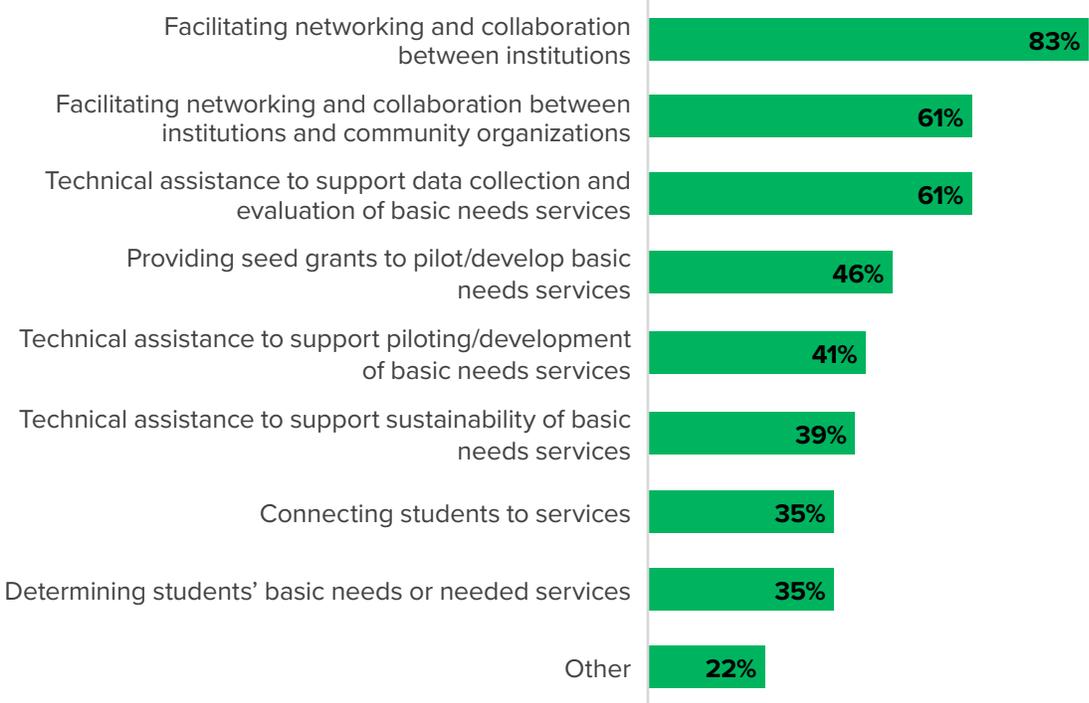
Colleges were most likely to receive support with networking and collaboration from the ECMC Foundation BNI grantees

To learn how BNI grantees supported their partner institutions, we asked survey respondents to indicate which of eight types of support they received from grantees (see figure 2 for the eight types of support). According to responding institutions, **every grantee provided every type of support**, although some supports were more common than others. Most institutions (83%) indicated that grantees helped facilitate networking and collaboration between institutions. Other common supports included facilitating networking and collaboration between institutions and community organizations and providing technical assistance to support data collection and evaluation of basic needs services (61% of institutions received these two types of support). Results are presented by grantee in table C5 in appendix C.

“[What has been the most helpful about the support from Auburn University’s Hunger Solutions Institute is] information from collaboration with other institutions and the wealth of knowledge and their timely availability to assist with questions and our needs.”

–Alabama university

Figure 2. Percentage of postsecondary institutions that said they received the following type of support from ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative grantees



Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions. “Other” category includes advocacy; leadership, education, and policy initiatives; funding AmeriCorps positions; and financing food pantry costs.

Source: Authors’ analysis of survey data.

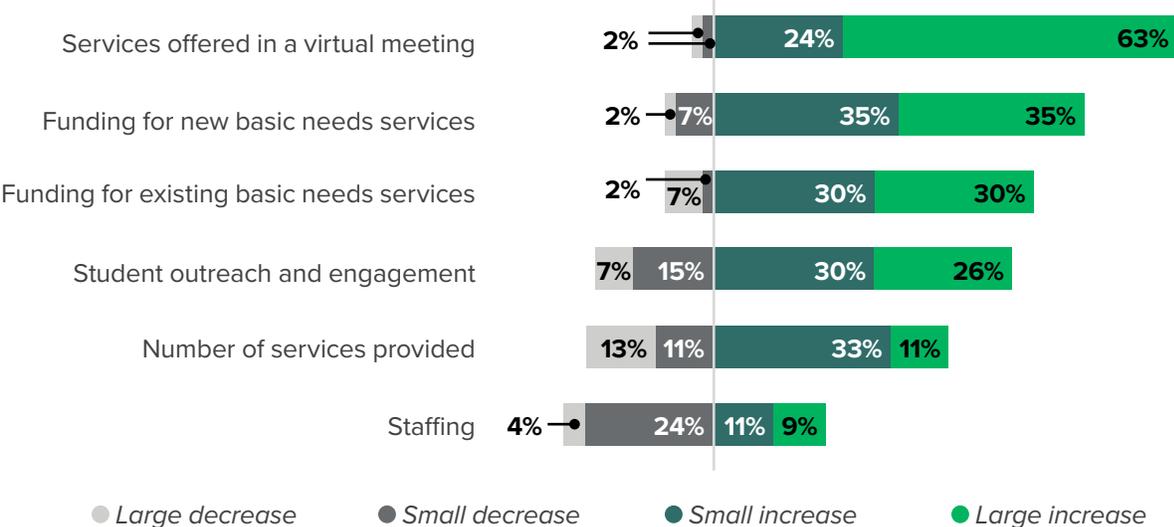
Implementation challenges

Staffing basic needs services and sustaining funding were large implementation challenges

During the pandemic, institutions have experienced both challenges and opportunities related to implementing basic needs services. Nearly 90 percent of responding institutions reported an increase in basic needs services offered virtually, 70 percent experienced an increase in funding for new services, and 60 percent reported an increase in funding for existing services. Over half of the institutions reported increases in student outreach and engagement, and nearly half reported increases in the number of services provided.

However, while half of the institutions experienced no changes in staffing for basic needs services, nearly 30 percent of the institutions reported decreases in staffing. This finding suggests that some institutions may be implementing more services with fewer staff members and aligns with responses about implementation challenges.

Figure 3. Postsecondary institutions’ rating of changes to basic needs services during the pandemic

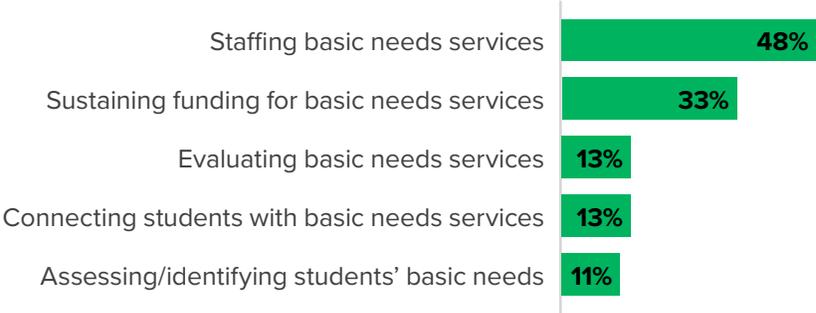


Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions. No change is not illustrated in this figure. For complete results, see table C6 in appendix C.

Source: Authors’ analysis of survey data.

Nearly half of the institutions reported that staffing was a large challenge, while one-third of the institutions cited sustaining funding as a large challenge. Institutions were less likely to report evaluating basic needs services, connecting students with basic needs services, and assessing/identifying students' basic needs as large challenges.

Figure 4. Percentage of postsecondary institutions that indicated each area was a large challenge



Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions. Complete findings are in table C7 in appendix C.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Institutions in cities were more likely to cite staffing as a large challenge; minority-serving and rural institutions were more likely to cite funding as a large challenge

Staffing challenges appeared to be more pervasive at institutions in cities compared to other locations. Institutions in cities made up 38 percent of all survey respondents but half of all respondents citing staffing as a large challenge. Minority-serving and rural institutions were more likely to cite sustaining funding as a large challenge. MSIs were 43 percent of all respondents and 53 percent of respondents citing funding as a large challenge. Similarly, rural institutions were 21 percent of all respondents and 33 percent of respondents citing funding as a large challenge.

“The JBAY grant has been critical for us to further develop our student case management component by hiring staff to assist the Coordinator. The grant is assisting students in need with emergency grants. The technical assistance provided by JBAY and the “community of practice” they have created so member colleges can work collectively to move the basic needs initiative forward have been valuable as well.”

–California community college

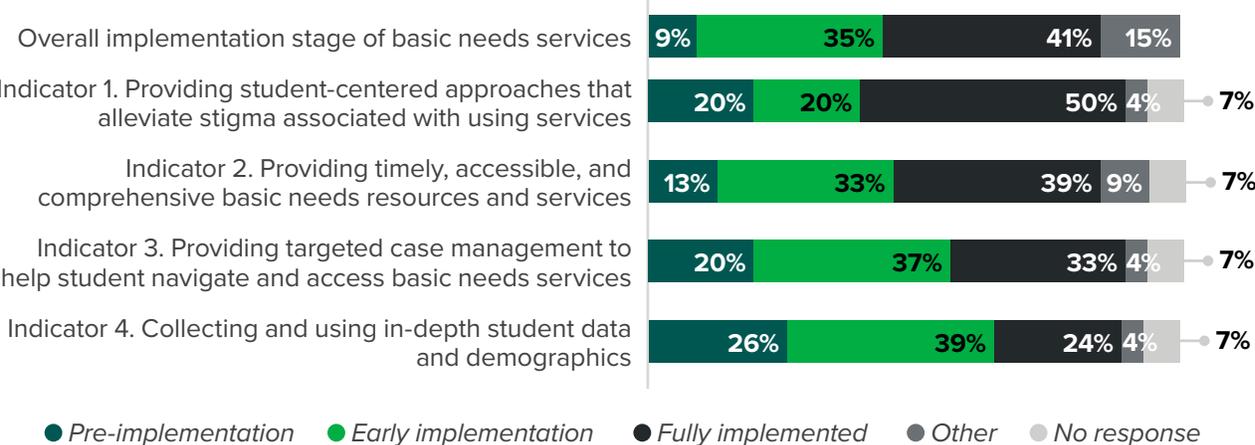
Stages of implementation

Forty-one percent of institutions said their basic needs services were fully implemented

Institutions were asked to rate the overall level of implementation of their basic needs services from three options: pre-implementation (or planning), early implementation, and fully implemented. Forty-one percent of institutions said their basic needs services were fully implemented, 35 percent were in the early implementation stage, and 9 percent were in the pre-implementation stage. Common challenges faced by institutions in the pre-implementation stage included lack of funding, space, staff, and challenges created by the pandemic. The remaining institutions (15%) selected “other” and explained that they were between implementation stages or that different services were at different stages.

Institutions also rated their level of implementation across four indicators that were drawn from the literature on basic needs initiatives and feedback from ECMC Foundation BNI grantees. Only three institutions rated their services as fully implemented for every indicator. More than half of all institutions had achieved full implementation of indicator 1 (providing student-centered approaches that alleviate stigma associated with using services). By contrast, only about one-quarter of institutions were fully implementing indicator 4 (collecting and using in-depth student data and demographics). There was a similar pattern among the 41 percent of institutions that reported full implementation of their basic needs services: 82 percent of these institutions reported full implementation of indicators 1 and 2, 71 percent reported full implementation of indicator 3, and only 47 percent indicated full implementation of indicator 4.

Figure 5. Percentage of institutions at each implementation stage overall and by indicator



Note: Based on survey responses from 47 institutions. “Other” category includes being in between implementation stages or basic needs services being at different stages.

Source: Authors’ analysis of survey data.

Finally, institutions were asked to describe what these stages of implementation look like for each indicator. This information will be used to develop a rubric with examples of pre-implementation, early implementation, and full implementation activities for each of the four indicators. The rubric can be used to set goals and assess progress. The institutions' descriptions of each stage of implementation appear below.

Full implementation of basic needs services was categorized by embedded institutional practices, highly accessible services, trained faculty and staff members, case management approaches, strong community partners, and data use for continuous improvement

Institutions that said they fully implemented indicator 1 (student-centered approaches that alleviate stigma) described services that were normalized as part of campus culture. They shared strategies they used to destigmatize use of basic needs services including discreet (yet central) locations, benefits available to all students, and trained advisors who provide holistic support and build trusting relationships with students.

Institutions that had fully implemented indicator 2 (providing timely, accessible, and comprehensive services) described services that were integrated into existing activities with broad distribution and outreach. Services were centralized; physically located in high-traffic areas on campus; and promoted in multiple ways through orientations, course syllabi, college social media platforms, and verbal recommendations from peers, faculty members, and staff members. Respondents spoke of aligning outreach campaigns with "financial aid priority deadlines, health care enrollment deadlines, [and] tax filing deadlines."

"Most of our faculty have statements on their [learning management system] pages about the basic needs services that directs them to the webpage, we advertise all over social media, and we use a case management and peer support program to reach students in need. Our categorical programs help connect students to services and we ask the student who were helped to pay it forward and tell others. We have a campus YouTube channel that provides updates to students about all types of information including basic needs."

—California community college

Institutions that had fully implemented indicator 3 (targeted case management) reported that case management staff members, advisors, faculty members, and student leaders received training to help build campus awareness around basic needs and connect students to services. These institutions described strong community partnerships and case management teams that developed trusting relationships with students.

Institutions that had fully implemented indicator 4 (collecting and using data) had well-established data systems in place to track access and outcomes. These institutions also had the ability to gather feedback to support continuous improvement.

Early implementation of basic needs services was categorized by efforts to expand services and hire staff members; enhance outreach, training, and case management; and address challenges related to lack of awareness, hiring, and data collection and use

Institutions in the early implementation stage for indicator 1 (student-centered approaches that alleviate stigma) described efforts to expand access, build awareness, and reduce stigma about basic needs services. This included marketing campaigns, working to increase staffing and secure space on campus, and providing more ways for students to access services.

Institutions in early implementation for indicator 2 (providing timely, accessible, and comprehensive services) described a focus on expanding or scaling services. Respondents shared that they were working to make systems easier to access for students and building partnerships both on and off campus for outreach and service provision.

Institutions in early implementation for indicator 3 (targeted case management) were often developing or formalizing case management approaches. They described challenges with limited staff capacity for case management and difficulties hiring staff. Some also described new efforts to target outreach to specific students (e.g., students eligible for Pell Grants).

Institutions in early implementation for indicator 4 (collecting and using data) shared that they were beginning to collect more detailed data, build data collection activities into existing student surveys, and partner with institutional research or faculty researchers to support data collection and analysis.

“We’re beyond early implementation but can definitely improve. Co-Advisors log and assist with support services usage, but our tracking is not centralized. Students could benefit if all of our dispersed services logged usage in a central location so we can see who needs help consistently and help us determine how to better offer services.”

–Michigan community college

Pre-implementation of basic needs services was categorized by launching new services, developing outreach materials, piloting case management approaches, and aligning and developing data sources

Institutions in the pre-implementation stage for indicator 1 (student-centered approaches that alleviate stigma) were developing marketing materials for students focused on normalizing access and decreasing stigma in addition to working to make services more accessible.

Institutions in pre-implementation for indicator 2 (providing timely, accessible, and comprehensive services) described launching or piloting services. They often shared that they were working to connect fragmented services so that they were centralized and easier to navigate for students.

Institutions in pre-implementation for indicator 3 (targeted case management) reported that there was no case management in place. Some described piloting new approaches or engaging in some follow-up with students. Some institutions were partnering with advisors to provide some individualized support to students.

Institutions in pre-implementation for indicator 4 (collecting and using data) shared that they had limited or no data collection practices for basic needs services and that available data were not centralized or linked across systems. Some shared a need for data on academic outcomes or student need. In some cases, institutions were beginning to partner with institutional research to establish a plan for data collection and evaluation.

“An extensive, well thought out plan for providing targeted case management services to students has been developed, but currently requires additional resources (funding, staffing, space, etc.) in addition to reorganization of services so that they are more centrally located for students, rather than spread across multiple areas and buildings on different parts of campus.”

–Michigan community college

Conclusion and next steps

Overall, we found that many types of basic needs services were offered across diverse institutions in five states. However, some institutions faced staffing and funding challenges that may inhibit full implementation. Further, patterns in the findings raise questions about equitable access to basic needs services: Institutions with a greater proportion of students of color appeared slightly less likely to offer services, and minority-serving and rural institutions were more challenged by funding than other institutions.

Implementation findings emphasized that fully implemented basic needs services engage all parts of the college and beyond, including campus leadership, faculty members, staff members, student leaders, and community partners who work to formalize policies and processes, centralize services, raise awareness, normalize access, connect students to services, and build trust so students continue to access the resources and services they need to thrive. Moving forward, helping institutions embed basic needs services into institutional practice and culture will require continued partnerships and investments.

In 2022, the evaluation team will again survey individuals at the same partner institutions to learn about their progress implementing and sustaining basic needs services. Additionally, the evaluation team will conduct virtual site visits to hear about implementation from staff members and students. The evaluation team will also examine student-level data to explore the characteristics and short-term academic outcomes of students who access basic needs services. We will continue to share evaluation findings to increase understanding of how to support and sustain basic needs initiatives that contribute to college students' success.

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Appendix A. ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative Grantees

Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC) is building institutional capacity to address food insecurity. ACC is piloting its efforts with four community colleges to increase student enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP Employment and Training benefits. If the initiative is successful, ACC will help expand efforts to the remaining 18 community colleges in Arkansas.

Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute is building capacity across a coalition of 10 public and private four-year universities in Alabama to systematically address food and nutrition insecurity. The institute is piloting a six-step approach to support these universities in their development, implementation, and evaluation of action plans to address food insecurity, and it hopes to expand to other two-year and four-year institutions in Alabama.

Ithaca S+R is developing new, holistic measures of student success that incorporate students' basic needs, students' own definitions of success, and traditional measures of success. Ithaca S+R released a **report** on measures of community college student success, a **report** on provost perspectives on college priorities and data collection practices and processes, and a **report** providing guidance on basic needs data collection.

John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) is working with California Community Colleges and California State Universities to implement rapid rehousing programs to reduce the number of students who experience homelessness. JBAY has provided grants, technical assistance, and training to seven community colleges to establish or expand their basic needs services. JBAY also released a **report** outlining promising strategies for addressing students' basic needs.

The Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) is addressing the lack of systematic tools community colleges have to meet their students' basic needs. MCCA is working with 24 Michigan community colleges to build their capacity to understand students' basic needs, scale the support services they provide, increase student access to MI Bridges (an online portal through which individuals can apply for public benefits), and share best practices statewide. MCCA also released a **report** providing an overview of the MI-BEST Initiative, outlining progress towards scaling economic stability practices and insights gleaned from interviewed colleges.

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK), in partnership with the **University of Texas at San Antonio**, is building capacity among Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) in Texas to develop and evaluate basic needs services. UTK will assess the current landscape of campus basic needs services at Texas HSIs, provide technical assistance to between six and eight HSIs, and facilitate a network of HSIs across Texas to promote the use of evidence-based basic needs services.

United Way of King County (UWKC) is building capacity among community and technical colleges in Washington state to disrupt the cycle of poverty and promote student success. UWKC is implementing on-campus Benefits Hubs that provide housing, food, and financial supports across 10 institutions. Benefits Hubs campuses receive staffing support from UWKC and participate in a learning cohort with other Benefits Hub campus champions.

Appendix B. Survey administration and analysis

Survey administration and respondents

In spring 2021, Education Northwest administered a survey to contacts at the partner institutions for five ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative grantees: Arkansas Community Colleges, Auburn University’s Hunger Solutions Institute, John Burton Advocates for Youth, Michigan Community College Association, and United Way of King County. The purpose of the survey was to learn about basic needs services on each campus and the role of the ECMC Foundation grantee in supporting those services.

In March 2021, Education Northwest contacted each grantee and asked them to provide contact information for one individual at each partner institution that worked on the ECMC Foundation Basic Needs Initiative. The survey was sent from April through June 2021 to contacts at 75 postsecondary institutions. Forty-two colleges completed the survey and five additional colleges partially completed the survey for a total response rate of 56 percent completing the survey and 63 percent providing at least partial responses.

Responding institutions and nonresponding institutions were similar across average institutional characteristics, except that responding institutions were more likely to be suburban than nonresponding institutions (table B1).

Table B1. Average characteristics of partner institutions

	All partner institutions (n = 75)	Survey respondents (n = 47)	Survey nonrespondents (n = 28)
Total institutions	75	47	28
Fall 2020 full-time undergraduate enrollment	5866	5689	6164
Fall 2020 part-time undergraduate enrollment	4264	4152	4452
Fall 2020 published in-state tuition and fees	\$5,800	\$5,959	\$5,533
Net price for full-time/first-time undergraduates (2019/20) ¹	\$8,570	\$9,414	\$8,056
Total revenue per FTE (2019/20)	\$29,922	\$35,885	\$26,292
Student services expenditures per FTE (2019/20)	\$2,689	\$2,789	\$2,628
Minority-serving institution ²	41.3%	42.6%	39.3%

	All partner institutions (n = 75)	Survey respondents (n = 47)	Survey nonrespondents (n = 28)
Fall 2020 percentage of undergraduate students who identify as students of color	53.3%	53.0%	53.8%
Fall 2019 percentage of undergraduate students who received Pell grants	34.1%	34.0%	34.3%
City	45.3%	38.3%	57.1%
Suburb*	22.7%	29.8%	10.7%
Town	8.0%	10.6%	3.6%
Rural	24.0%	21.3%	28.6%
Four-year public	42.7%	42.6%	42.9%
Four-year private	1.3%	2.1%	0.0%
Two-year public	56.0%	55.3%	57.1%

*Difference between respondents and nonrespondents is statistically different at the 5 percent level of significance.

Notes: All data are from Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Institutional Characteristics, Fall Enrollment, and Student Financial Aid survey components. All data come from the most recent year available, which is the 2020/21 academic year for institutional characteristics and fall enrollment and the 2019/20 academic year for financial aid data.

¹ Net price is generated by subtracting the average amount of federal, state or local government, or institutional grant and scholarship aid from the total cost of attendance. Total cost of attendance is the sum of published tuition and fees, books and supplies, and the weighted average room and board and other expenses.

² Minority-serving institution includes Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions, historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and Tribal colleges and universities.

Source: Authors' analysis of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

About two-thirds of survey respondents (30; 65%) were administrators, and one-quarter of respondents were advisors (12; 26%). The rest were either program coordinators, managers, or directors (4; 8%). Survey respondents were asked to describe their role with their institution's basic needs services and the services they work with most closely. Many referred to their role in providing specific services (e.g., 46% mentioned a role in services related to food, 29% described a role in services related to housing), and around one-third of respondents (31%) referred to a more general role, such as ensuring students' basic needs were met or reducing barriers to success. Other respondents had roles in evaluation, health and wellness, advising, communication, career services, enrollment, financial aid, and partnership development.

Survey analysis

We aggregated responses to all close-ended survey items across responding institutions and presented them in this brief. We also summarized all open-ended responses (e.g., write-in responses when respondents selected “other”) and identified illustrative quotes related to ECMC grantee support. To analyze the open-ended responses related to implementation of basic needs services, two researchers used qualitative analysis methods. We developed an initial set of codes, labeled responses using these codes, reviewed and refined our codes, and then finalized coding responses to surface common themes and illustrative examples.

To explore how survey findings varied with institutional characteristics, we merged survey data with publicly available, institution-level data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). IPEDS data were obtained from the Institutional Characteristics, Fall Enrollment, and Student Financial Aid survey components. These data were merged one-to-one with survey response data. Using the merged dataset, we conducted descriptive analyses to examine how institutional characteristics varied across different survey responses and regression analyses to examine how institutional characteristics related to the provision of basic needs services.

Appendix C. Survey results

This appendix provides results from the survey analysis.

Survey question: *What basic needs services are provided to students through your institution?*

Select all that apply.

Table C1. Number and percentage of institutions that reported providing basic needs services

Basic needs services	Number	Percentage
Food assistance	45	95.7
Access to technology	40	85.1
Housing assistance	35	74.5
Financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance	34	72.3
Transportation support	33	70.2
Health care and personal care assistance	28	59.6
Access to child care	22	46.8
<i>Of institutions that provide food assistance:</i>		
Food pantry	43	95.6
Help applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	35	77.8
One-time/emergency fund to pay for groceries/food	32	71.1
Help applying for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	22	48.9
Help applying for Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	19	42.2
Ongoing assistance to pay for food outside of SNAP/TANF, WIC, or other state-level programs (e.g., meal vouchers, stipend for use on campus)	18	40.0
Other (includes connections to local food pantries, food delivery, or gift cards)	9	20.0
<i>Of institutions that provide access to technology:</i>		
Loaned/gifted digital device	38	95.0
Loaned/gifted WiFi hotspots	34	85.0
Expanded WiFi service area around the campus (e.g., parking lot)	30	75.0
Assistance with internet utility bill	18	45.0
Supported costs associated with digital access other than utility bill	15	37.5
Other (includes course materials, ebooks, computer labs)	6	15.0

Basic needs services	Number	Percentage
<i>Of institutions that provide housing:</i>		
One-time/emergency fund to pay for housing	30	83.3
Help with finding housing	29	80.6
Assistance with utilities (water, power, phone)	25	69.4
Help applying for Section 8 housing assistance or other subsidized housing	18	50.0
Hotel/motel vouchers	18	50.0
Off-campus moving assistance/furnishing	11	30.6
Ongoing assistance to pay rent other than Section 8	11	30.6
Assistance with furniture and household items	10	27.8
Other (includes tiny home housing, car or insurance payment)	5	13.9
<i>Of institutions that provide financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance:</i>		
Help with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or other financial aid applications	31	91.2
Financial planning or financial literacy classes or workshops	29	85.3
SNAP Employment and Training program	25	73.5
Help preparing tax returns	17	50.0
Legal assistance	13	38.2
Support applying for unemployment benefits	7	20.6
Other (includes career counseling, financial management, assistance navigating online resources)	6	17.6
<i>Of institutions that provide health care and personal care assistance:</i>		
Mental health services or referral	24	85.7
Hygiene supplies	21	75.0
Physical health services or referral	14	50.0
Enrollment and access to health services including insurance	12	42.9
Clothing closets	12	42.9
Other (includes access to a wellness center, emergency fund, health screening, occupational therapy)	6	21.4

Note: Based on survey responses from 47 institutions.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Table C2. Relationship between institutional characteristics and provision of basic needs services

	Financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance	Food assistance	Housing assistance	Access to technology	Health care and personal care assistance	Access to child care	Transportation support	Count of basic needs services provided
Minority-serving institution	-0.137 (0.160)	-0.223 (0.139)	-0.056 (0.149)	0.152 (0.296)	-0.469 (0.400)	0.570* (0.272)	-0.136 (0.184)	-0.299 (0.807)
Fall 2020 enrollment: Full-time undergraduates (in 100s)	-0.002 (0.003)	0.001 (0.001)	0.000 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)	0.002 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.008)
Fall 2020 enrollment: Part-time undergraduates (in 100s)	0.000 (0.003)	0.001 (0.001)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.004)	0.006+ (0.003)	0.004 (0.003)	0.009 (0.011)
Fall 2020 percentage of undergraduates who identify as students of color	-0.008+ (0.004)	-0.007* (0.003)	-0.013* (0.006)	-0.008+ (0.004)	-0.006 (0.007)	-0.012+ (0.006)	-0.010 (0.007)	-0.064** (0.021)
Fall 2019 percentage of undergraduates who received Pell	0.017* (0.007)	0.007 (0.007)	0.017* (0.008)	0.008 (0.010)	0.009 (0.013)	-0.002 (0.015)	0.017 (0.010)	0.073 (0.044)
2019 average net price for first-time/full-time undergraduates (log)	0.197 (0.166)	0.164 (0.158)	0.203 (0.205)	-0.215+ (0.122)	-0.049 (0.234)	-0.185 (0.285)	0.377 (0.230)	0.493 (0.911)
2020 published in-state tuition and fees (log)	-0.008 (0.350)	0.059 (0.140)	-0.484 (0.447)	0.036 (0.193)	-0.046 (0.525)	-0.272 (0.489)	-0.513 (0.479)	-1.228 (1.668)
2019 total revenues per FTE (log)	0.138 (0.239)	-0.032 (0.095)	0.021 (0.300)	0.145 (0.187)	0.016 (0.385)	0.551+ (0.321)	0.081 (0.300)	0.920 (1.105)

	Financial planning, employment support, or legal assistance	Food assistance	Housing assistance	Access to technology	Health care and personal care assistance	Access to child care	Transportation support	Count of basic needs services provided
2019 total expenditures on student services per FTE (log)	-0.099 (0.216)	-0.132 (0.092)	0.048 (0.252)	-0.146 (0.230)	-0.534+ (0.275)	-0.250 (0.200)	0.135 (0.262)	-0.979 (0.845)
Carnegie classification indicators	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
School locale indicators	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Grantee indicators	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Observations	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	45
Adjusted R2	0.210	0.222	0.202	0.221	0.092	0.263	0.091	0.374

+Marginally statistically significant at 10 percent level. *Statistically significant at 5 percent level. **Statistically significant at 1 percent level.

Note: Results are from regression analysis using survey responses merged with Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data. All models account for Carnegie classification, locale, and grantee. The Carnegie classification indicators account for the highest degree awarded by the institution. (Three institutions award doctorates, nine award master’s degrees, and 35 award associate degrees as their highest degree. No institution awards bachelor’s degrees as their highest degree.) School locale indicators account for whether the institution is in a city, town, suburb, or rural area. Grantee indicators account for the grantee and state since each grantee is in a separate state. Robust standard errors in parentheses. Shaded cells indicate results are statistically significant.

Source: Authors’ analysis of survey and Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data.

Survey question: *Who are key partners in implementing basic needs services? Select all that apply.*

Table C3. Key college partners and external partners in implementing basic needs services

Partner	Number	Percentage
<i>College partners</i>		
Campus leadership	41	87.2
Counselors/advisors	40	85.1
Dean of students	36	76.6
Faculty	32	68.1
Student association(s)	25	53.2
Other (write-in): financial aid, residence life, student health, dining services, student success office, college foundation	21	44.7
Institutional research	18	38.3
Student health center	14	29.8
Other student resource centers (e.g., LGBTQ center)	14	29.8
Board of trustees	10	21.3
<i>External partners</i>		
Community-based organizations (e.g., nonprofits)	43	93.5
Foundations or individual donors	37	80.4
State department of human services/health and human services	22	47.8
Community college association	18	39.1
Higher education state agency	14	30.4
Local government	10	21.7
Businesses	10	21.7
Other (write-in): faith-based organizations, community food banks or farms, health clinics, public health agencies	8	17.4
Advisory board	5	10.9
Evaluator	4	8.7

Note: Based on survey responses from 47 institutions. Respondents were asked to write-in the specific student resource centers that were partners in implementing basic needs services, and respondents shared a wide variety of centers, including the DREAMers/DREAM Resource Center, Black Unity Center, Umoja, Disability Programs and Resource Center, Education Opportunity Program, former foster youth center, transfer center, student equity and multicultural center, health and wellness center, and veteran resource center.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Survey question: *What strategies and approaches have been the most important in implementing basic needs services at your institution over the past five years? Select up to three.*

Table C4. Strategies and approaches used to implement basic needs services in the past five years

Strategy	Number of institutions that ranked this in the top three	Percentage of institutions that ranked this in the top three
Campus resources and funding	38	82.6
Partnerships with community-based organizations	26	56.5
Campus leadership support	25	54.3
Campus champions (i.e., advocates for basic needs services on campus)	20	43.5
Tools/surveys for assessing basic needs	11	23.9
Partnerships with student organizations	6	13.0
Partnerships with state agencies	5	10.9
Partnerships with other colleges and universities	2	4.3
Evaluation to monitor progress/outcomes	1	2.2
Other (write-in): communication with state government	1	2.2
Partnerships in local government	0	0
Partnerships with businesses	0	0

Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Survey question: Which support(s) is [the ECMC Foundation grantee] providing your institution to help implement basic needs services? Select all that apply.

Table C5. Supports provided to institutions by ECMC Foundation grantees

Support type	All responses	Arkansas Community Colleges	Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute	John Burton Advocates for Youth	Michigan Community College Association	United Way of King County
Number of institutions	46	4	6	14	15	8
Facilitating networking and collaboration between institutions	83%	100%	100%	64%	93%	75%
Technical assistance to support data collection and evaluation of basic needs service(s)	61%	100%	100%	21%	64%	75%
Facilitating networking and collaboration between institutions and community organizations	61%	75%	50%	57%	50%	88%
Providing seed grants to pilot/develop basic needs service(s)	46%	75%	100%	29%	7%	88%
Technical assistance to support piloting/development of basic needs service(s)	41%	75%	50%	36%	14%	75%
Technical assistance to support sustainability of basic needs service(s)	39%	50%	67%	21%	29%	63%
Determining students' basic needs or needed services	35%	50%	50%	14%	36%	50%
Connecting students to services	35%	100%	17%	14%	14%	88%

Support type	All responses	Arkansas Community Colleges	Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute	John Burton Advocates for Youth	Michigan Community College Association	United Way of King County
Other (write-in): advocacy; leadership, education, and policy initiative; funding AmeriCorps positions; and financing food pantry costs	22%	0%	0%	43%	7%	38%

Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Survey question: *How have your institution's basic needs services changed in response to the pandemic?*

Table C6. Changes that institutions made in response to the pandemic

	1 = Large decrease		2 = Small decrease		3 = No change		4 = Small increase		5 = Large increase	
	# of institutions	% of institutions	# of institutions	% of institutions	# of institutions	% of institutions	# of institutions	% of institutions	# of institutions	% of institutions
Funding for existing basic needs services	3	6.5	1	2.2	14	30.4	14	30.4	14	30.4
Funding for new basic needs services	1	2.2	3	6.5	10	21.7	16	34.8	16	34.8
Number of services provided	6	13.0	5	10.9	15	32.6	15	32.6	5	10.9
Staffing	2	4.3	11	23.9	24	52.2	5	10.9	4	8.7
Services offered in a virtual setting	1	2.2	1	2.2	4	8.7	11	23.9	29	63.0
Student outreach and engagement	3	6.5	7	15.2	10	21.7	14	30.4	12	26.1

Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Survey question: *What challenges has your institution experienced in implementing basic needs services over the past five years?*

Table C7. Challenges with implementing basic needs services in the past year

	1 = Not a challenge		2 = A small challenge		3 = A moderate challenge		4 = A large challenge		N/A	
	<i># of institutions</i>	<i>% of institutions</i>								
Sustaining funding for basic needs services	7	15.2	10	21.7	14	30.4	15	32.6	0	0.0
Assessing/identifying students' basic needs	9	19.6	15	32.6	17	37.0	5	10.9	0	0.0
Connecting students with basic needs services	6	13.0	13	28.3	21	45.7	6	13.0	0	0.0
Staffing basic needs services	6	13.0	5	10.9	12	26.1	22	47.8	1	2.2
Evaluating basic needs services	4	8.7	13	28.3	22	47.8	6	13.0	1	2.2
Sustaining funding for basic needs services	7	15.2	10	21.7	14	30.4	15	32.6	0	0.0

Note: Based on survey responses from 46 institutions.

Source: Authors' analysis of survey data.

Table C8. Characteristics of institutions that cited funding and staffing as a “large challenge” to basic needs service implementation

	Characteristics of all survey respondents	Selected “Staffing basic needs services” as a large challenge	Selected “Sustaining funding for basic needs services” as a large challenge
Number of institutions	47	22	15
Minority-serving institution	43%	45%	53%
Students of color	53%	57%	60%
Students who received Pell	34%	36%	37%
City	38%	50%	33%
Suburb	30%	18%	27%
Town	11%	9%	7%
Rural	21%	23%	33%
Four-year public	43%	50%	40%
Two-year public	55%	50%	60%

Note: Based on survey responses merged with Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System data. Bolded numbers indicate that the percentage is at least 10 percentage points different from the percentage for all survey respondents.

Source: Authors’ analysis of survey and IPEDS data.