



openarms

BY PROVIDING FOOD AS MEDICINE,
WE NOURISH OUR CLIENTS AND BUILD COMMUNITY.

Open Arms of Minnesota
2500 Bloomington Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55404
www.openarmsmn.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Ethan Armstrong

ethan@openarmsmn.org

Cell: 320-815-2351

Open Arms of Minnesota Earns Accreditation from Food Is Medicine Coalition

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (July 26, 2024) -- Open Arms of Minnesota, the Twin Cities-based non-profit dedicated to providing nourishing, medically tailored meals to individuals with critical illnesses, has earned accreditation from the Food Is Medicine Coalition (FIMC). This recognition places Open Arms among an elite group of organizations nationwide that demonstrate a high standard of care in delivering medically tailored meals (MTM).

Medically tailored meals are delivered to individuals living with severe, complex and chronic illness through a referral from a medical professional or healthcare plan. Expert Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDN) use the practice of layering diets – as outlined in the FIMC Medically Tailored Meal Intervention Accreditation Criteria and Requirements - tailored to the needs of the community member to produce optimal health outcomes.

Open Arms' MTM program is designed by a team of registered dietitians (RDs) and dietetic technicians (DTRs) who help plan and approve the meals to meet the unique nutritional needs of our clients living with critical and life-threatening illnesses. Additionally, clients receive personalized RDN education and coaching to support long-term health management and nutritional stability.

As the "food is medicine" movement gains traction across the country, and with the White House's National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health emphasizing the importance of medically tailored meals, the FIMC MTM Accreditation provides a robust set of standards ensuring quality and consistency in MTM services nationwide.

CONTACT

OPENARMSMN.ORG
612 872 1152

LOCATIONS

2500 BLOOMINGTON AVE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404

380 E LAFAYETTE FRONTAGE RD
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“FIMC celebrates Open Arms of Minnesota’s stellar MTM service provision as demonstrated through Accreditation,” said Alissa Wassung, executive director of FIMC. “Open Arms demonstrates commitment to clients and a degree of service that can be trusted as a FIMC Accredited agency.”

The rigorous FIMC accreditation process assesses numerous aspects of an organization’s operations and MTM services, including nutritional quality, meal packaging and labeling, delivery model, volunteer and client services, and food safety practices.

Open Arms of Minnesota: A Commitment to Nourishing Our Neighbors

Established in 1986, Open Arms of Minnesota began as a grassroots response to the AIDS crisis. Today, it supports a diverse population of individuals living with critical illnesses, including HIV/AIDS, Cancer, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), Multiple Sclerosis (MS), End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), Congestive Heart Failure (CHF), and/or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

“This accreditation from FIMC is a significant acknowledgment of our commitment to delivering high-quality, medically tailored meals,” said Open Arms CEO Leah Hebert Welles. “It highlights the exceptional research, planning, and care we provide our clients through the meals we create in our kitchens and underscores the reliability and rigor of our programs. Open Arms has been nourishing some of the most vulnerable members of our community for nearly 40 years and we’ll continue to do so for another 40 years.”

The FIMC MTM Accreditation distills the coalition’s extensive experience into a measurable standard, providing nonprofit meal providers the opportunity to earn a credential that underscores their commitment to high-quality MTM interventions. This accreditation assures stakeholders of the reliability and excellence of services provided, regardless of the organization's size or the illnesses they address.

To learn more about FIMC Accreditation, visit fimcoalition.org. For more information on supporting Open Arms of Minnesota through volunteering, donations, and more, visit openarmsmn.org.

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About Open Arms of Minnesota

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Open Arms of Minnesota is a nonprofit organization that prepares and delivers nourishing meals free of charge to critically ill Minnesotans and their families. By providing food as medicine, Open Arms nourishes its clients and builds community.

About Food Is Medicine Coalition

The Food is Medicine Coalition (FIMC) is the national coalition of nonprofit organizations that provide medically tailored meals (MTMs) and groceries (MTGs), medical nutrition therapy, and nutrition counseling and education to people in communities across the country who are living with severe, complex, and chronic illnesses. FIMC agencies created the medically tailored meal intervention as a response to community need nearly 40 years ago and maintain the nutrition standards for the intervention. We advance equitable access to these life-saving interventions through policy change, research and evaluation, and best practices. Visit fimcoalition.org for more information.

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