

WellCare of Kentucky Launches Food Is Medicine Program in Eastern Kentucky to Tackle Growing Diabetes Rates - Mar 18, 2026

Program to support eligible Medicaid enrollees with diabetes in rural Kentucky with tailored initiatives to support nutrition security and chronic disease management

HAZARD, Ky., March 18, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- [WellCare of Kentucky](#) and [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: CNC), today announced an investment of \$550,000 to launch the WellCare Food Is Medicine Program ("the Program") to address diabetes-related needs in rural communities throughout Eastern Kentucky. The Program builds on an existing nutrition security-related partnership with [Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation](#) (MCHC), a Kentucky-based rural community health center, and [Community Agricultural Nutritional Enterprises, Inc.](#) (CANE), a provider of fresh, healthy meals using Appalachian-grown produce.

Having access to high quality, nutritious food is essential to overall health and well-being. By integrating healthy food access into healthcare delivery, Food is Medicine programs go beyond solving for hunger, focusing on using nutrition to treat chronic conditions, including diabetes, by improving clinical measures.

"More than 480,000 Kentuckians, nearly 14% of our adult population, are managing diabetes, with rural Appalachian communities disproportionately affected due to food insecurity, transportation barriers, and limited preventive care access," said Corey Ewing, WellCare of Kentucky plan president. "That's why we chose to introduce the Food is Medicine program, reflecting our core focus on improving the health of our communities and ensuring our members have access to the care they need."

Through services provided by MCHC and CANE, the program will provide eligible Medicaid enrollees with diabetes access to weekly home-delivered, medically tailored meals, recipes, and educational materials for a period of up to three years. By increasing access to nutritious food and health education, the program aims to help underserved, rural communities in Eastern Kentucky better manage diabetes and improve health outcomes.

"Food is Medicine programs can significantly support chronic disease management and reduce food insecurity. Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation believes that structured lifestyle initiatives centered on nutrition, physical activity, and behavior change can help prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes," said Stephanie McComb, LPN Director of Quality Improvement, MCHC.

"Food-based interventions—like CANE's medically tailored meals and diabetic friendly food boxes—help improve clinical outcomes and reduce healthcare utilization among high-risk populations, including those in Letcher and Bell counties," said Brandon Fleming, Director of CANE Inc.

About WellCare of Kentucky

WellCare of Kentucky provides government-sponsored managed care services to families, children, seniors, and individuals with complex needs primarily through Medicaid, Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans across the state. WellCare of Kentucky is a [Centene Corporation](#) company. For more information, visit [wellcareky.com](#).

About Centene Foundation

The [Centene Foundation \(the "Foundation"\)](#), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation (NYSE: CNC) ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's mission-driven culture and enhances the work Centene is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing drivers of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare, social services, and education. To learn more, visit the Centene Foundation's website.

SOURCE Centene Corporation

For further information: Darren Levitz, 502-759-8429, darren.levitz@wellcare.com

Additional assets available online: [PHOTOS](#)

(1)

<https://investors.centene.com/2026-03-18-WellCare-of-Kentucky-Launches-Food-Is-Medicine-Program-in-Eastern-Kentucky-to-Tackle-Growing-Diabetes-Rates>