



## **FACTS ABOUT HUNGER**

- In 2008, there were 2.3 million food shelf visits statewide, and food shelf usage continues to climb.
- 54 million pounds of food were given to Minnesota families by food shelves.
- Almost one million Minnesotans live in households struggling to put food on the table.
- More than half of adult food shelf visitors have jobs.
- There are more than 300 food shelves in Minnesota, serving every county.
- Young children who suffer from poor nutrition score much lower on tests of reading, writing, arithmetic, and general knowledge.
- Poor nutrition and hunger lead to:
  - slowed mental and physical growth
  - more infant deaths
  - more hospital stays
  - more infections and other illnesses
  - obesity
  - emotional problems like depression, irritability, fatigue, and poor concentration
- One in eight Americans do not have enough food for a healthy life.
- More than 36 million Americans are too poor to buy enough food.

***If you have questions about hunger or nutrition, please talk to your health care provider.***

**Sources:** Second Harvest Heartland, [www.2harvest.org](http://www.2harvest.org) (2007); MN Food Share, [www.gmcc.org/foodshare](http://www.gmcc.org/foodshare) (2009); Children's Health Watch, [www.childrenshealthwatch.org](http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org) (2008); Feeding America hunger relief charity, [www.feedingamerica.org](http://www.feedingamerica.org).



## **FACTS ABOUT PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS**

- A physician assistant (PA) is a licensed health care provider.
- PAs work as members of the physician-physician assistant team to provide quality, affordable health care.
- PAs conduct physical exams, diagnose illnesses, prescribe medicines, order and interpret tests, perform procedures, counsel and educate patients, assist in surgery, research and teach.
- PAs have intensive education and are nationally certified and licensed by the state board of medical practice.
- PAs have been practicing in Minnesota for almost 40 years.
- There are about 75,000 PAs working in the US.
- There were about 260 million visits to PAs in the US in 2008.
- PAs save as much as 20% in medical care costs.
- Studies show that health care services provided by PAs are similar in quality to care provided by physicians.
- Studies show that patients are highly satisfied with the quality of care provided by PAs.

***If you have questions about PAs, please ask.***

**Sources:** American Academy of Physician Assistants, 2008; Minnesota Medicine, May 2008.

**Minnesota's Physician Assistants care about hunger issues and their patients. Please let your PA know if you need help with food and nutrition.**