



Program: Evidence-Based Disease Prevention: Nutrition

Organization: Montachusett Opportunity Council

Project Title: Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults

Project Period: 10/01/2003 TO 09/30/2006

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Model

The Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults program focuses on encouraging seniors to look at nutrition strategies in a positive proactive manner and allowing them to understand the control they have in these matters. Education and self-management strategies are stressed along with a behavior change approach being a core component. The focus of this program is to stress heart and bone healthy nutrition strategies to help maintain one's wellness and independence and prevent chronic disease development or progression.

Adaptation of Model

This initiative was created as part of the John A. Hartford Foundation funded Model Programs Project led by NCOA. The model was created based on literature and evidence reviews, and will be implemented by this community-based organization as it was designed.

Project's Overall Design

The nutrition intervention is a behavior-focused model encouraging individuals to look at nutrition strategies in a positive proactive manner. The program is a six-week workshop that meets once a week for two and half hours each time. Upon completion of the six-week workshop, the senior participants will demonstrate a positive change of eating and or exercise lifestyles.

The sessions are focused around the food guide pyramid. The process of goal setting and problem solving techniques are applied and participants keep an exercise and diet journal. The groups are facilitated by a layperson and the participants' learning is self-directed as they are a part of the group problem solving. A nutritionist is a resource to the groups to help answer technical questions and support the facilitator. Sessions five is held at a grocery store and session six is a cooking demonstration. These sessions are highly interactive and

allow participants to read food labels, discuss cooking methods, and try new foods. About a month after the workshop has ended the group gets together for a luncheon. This is an opportunity to make use of learned skills and a time to discuss individual experiences with the program. At this meeting post questionnaires are completed.

Partnerships

National Council on Aging
Lahey Clinic
Montachusett Opportunity Council
Elderly Nutrition Programs
Community based senior groups
Health clinics/ physician groups
Churches
YMCA/ exercise facilities

Target Population

Participants will be 60+year-old community residents from diverse backgrounds and locations. The ideal number of participants enrolled in a session would be between 8-12.

Site selection is based on organizational readiness and fit, strength of resources and skills of co-leaders and volunteers. Also important is the sites existing partners in the community and collaboration potential with other health care and senior groups.

Anticipated Outcomes

The program goals are to foster improvement in nutrition lifestyle and focuses on all its components, food, exercise, behavior change, and social support. Participants' lifestyle changes will be measured by a pre and post questionnaire. Also a client satisfaction survey will monitor program quality assurance and participants' satisfaction with the program. The Model will prove to translate successfully to a wide range of diverse community groups. The program will be cost effective for the organizations and sustainable into their existing programs and services. The sites will develop and strengthen collaboration with community partners and health care entities.