

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM SURVEY- Chronic Disease

Contact Information

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Short Title: Web-based nutrition challenge program

Program Location: United States, Nevada, Las Vegas, Clark County

Objectives and Goals:

The Nutrition Challenge program was developed as a means to provide nutrition education and increase fruit and vegetable consumption among Clark County, Nevada residents.

The main objectives for the project were to:

- Develop a web-based program to provide nutrition education with a focus on fruits and vegetables
- Enroll at least 500 participants
- Demonstrate improvements in participants' behavior change stage and in consumption of fruits and vegetables by the conclusion of the 12-week program.

Methods:

A pre and post survey was used to evaluate changes in fruit and vegetable consumption as well as stage of behavior change among participants. An evaluation of the program showed statistically significant improvements in fruit and vegetable intake and stage of behavior change among participants utilizing the pre and post-program survey.

Participants register and log their daily servings of fruits and vegetables and visually track their progress on a graph. Each week participants are provided with new nutrition information as part of the program. Once registered, participants can go back and review the content from previous weeks.

Program Length:

The program's current duration is 12 weeks. Participants can start on any day and each week will receive new nutrition content each week

Number of target population reached by effort:

The program was geared towards females as they make most of their family's shopping and meal choices. A total of 2,637 participants signed up for the

program. Eighty five percent of our participants were female and 15% were male. Through media outreach and community partnerships, we were able to reach over 630,000 people during the first year with a message on the importance of eating healthy and information on the Nutrition Challenge Program.

Demographic Info:

We did not use ethnicity as a demographic identifier in the original version of the program. We used the following demographics: age, gender, and zip code and asked if participants spoke Spanish. An updated version of the program, scheduled to launch in fall 2009, will include additional nutrition and physical activity questions as part of the pre and post surveys. Demographic information including ethnicity and language preference will also be included in the updated program.

Overall Cost:

The initial cost in 2006 was paid with a one-time grant from the Trust Fund for Public Health for \$40,000 that included an eight week radio promotion of the program. Funding was also included for flyers, incentives, educational materials and computer programming. Because the program is sustained on our Get Healthy Clark County website www.gethealthyclarkcounty.org, the annual cost to maintain the program is minimal and includes program incentives, educational materials, printing and computer programming updates for an average budget of \$2,500 a year.

Funding Sources:

70 % State
30 % Local
Percentages ARE estimates

Outcomes:

To register for the program, each participant created a username and password. In addition, participants were asked a brief series of questions. Questions included participant's current number of daily servings of fruits and vegetables (a serving size description was included) and participants were asked to respond to statements designed to assess current stage of behavioral change consistent with the Transtheoretical Model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1985). These selections included: Not thinking about eating healthier; Thinking about eating healthier; Preparing to eat healthier; Eating healthy, but for less than 6 months; and Eating healthy for more than 6 months. At the completion of the 12-week program, participants were prompted to complete a post-program survey that included the same questions as the registration (pre-program) survey. Nineteen percent of eligible participants responded to the post-program survey. Of that group, 69% reported that they had increased their daily consumption of fruits and vegetables from the beginning of the program to the end. Another 47%

reported they were eating healthier and an additional 20% reported initiating healthier behaviors such as losing weight and starting an exercise program.

Did you make any estimates regarding costs deferred, outbreaks averted or deaths prevented?

No estimates were made regarding costs deferred, etc.

Additional Information:

The evaluation of the Nutrition Challenge Program provides preliminary evidence that an online program may help increase fruit and vegetable consumption. This is important because a majority of Nevada adults are not currently meeting the low end of the recommended five to nine daily servings of fruits and vegetables. The web-based nutrition program is a low-cost sustainable intervention that may improve daily fruit and vegetable consumption and advance people along the stages of behavior change continuum in their efforts to eat more fruits and vegetables.

The Nutrition Challenge Program was selected by the National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO) in 2007 to receive a Model Practice Award.

Future Plans:

We are working on refreshing this program to shorten the duration to an eight week program and include email messages to participants to offer recipes and tips to provide ongoing information and support. Additional pre and post survey questions and weekly graphs that will compare daily requirements with their actual amount of cups of fruits and vegetables were added to the program as well as physical activity questions to show program integration.