



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services > Bureau of Community Health and Wellness



Restaurant Initiative



Dear Local Health Advocate:

Obesity has become an all too present condition in Missouri's communities. Because it is so commonplace, it may not seem serious; however, there are devastating health and economic consequences to individuals and the communities they live in.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) is working on many levels to improve access to healthy foods and safe places to be physically active in our state. Realizing that more people are spending more of their food dollars in restaurants, including fast food establishments, providing tools to help them make healthier choices is of great importance. Providing customers with a tool for identifying healthier choices has the potential for changing social norms for restaurant dining and ultimately changing restaurant practice.

Working in partnership with the Polk County Live Well Alliance, DHSS has initiated the Missouri Live Well Restaurant program. We've designed this toolkit to help you implement the Live Well Restaurant program in your local area. These pages offer a step-by-step implementation guide, which includes nutrition criteria, application, promotional materials, evaluation resources and recommendations for gaining community buy-in.

The need for interventions delivered through restaurants is established through reports such as the Resource Guide for Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases, developed by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. This report cites evidence of the dramatic increase in the consumption of food prepared away from the home in the United States and notes that frequent consumption of foods away from the home has been associated with a diet high in fat and calories.

The benefits to implementing the Live Well Restaurant program in your local area include a stronger relationship between the local health agency and local restaurants to promote healthy environments. It also exposes area residents to the importance and benefits of selecting healthy menu options when eating out.

Should you have additional questions please contact, Pat Simmons, Assistant Chief, Bureau of Community Health and Wellness at 573-522-2820 or pat.simmons@health.mo.gov.

Thank you for all you do to improve the health and wellness of Missourians.

Pat Simmons



A TOOLKIT FOR CREATING LIVE WELL RESTAURANTS

INDEX

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Restaurants and the Law</i>	4
<i>Live Well Restaurants Nutrition Criteria</i>	6
<i>Getting Started</i>	
<i>Step 1: Assemble Necessary Resources</i>	7
<i>Step 2: Outreach and Application Assistance</i>	9
<i>Step 3: Determining Eligibility</i>	9
<i>Step 4: Notification of Live Well Status</i>	11
<i>Step 5: Promotion</i>	12
<i>Step 6: Evaluation</i>	15

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INTRODUCTION

Today Americans spend half of their food budgets on restaurant food, up from 25 percent in 1955.¹ Meanwhile, obesity rates have increased dramatically among all age groups since 1970, more than quadrupling among children ages 6 to 11. More than 23 million children and teens in the United States – nearly one in three young people – are overweight or obese.² Numerous studies link eating out with obesity and other related conditions.

Soon, families who eat out will have more information about how healthy – or unhealthy – their food is. A federal law requiring chain restaurants with 20 or more locations to provide calorie information directly on menus and menu boards was passed in 2010. While the law is a big step toward educating restaurant-goers about the food they eat, the new law does not require restaurants to provide healthy meals, and smaller restaurants don't have to comply with the new mandate.

What is the Live Well Restaurant program?

The Live Well Restaurant program is a menu labeling and social marketing initiative developed by the Polk County Live Well Alliance (LWA) to promote healthy living among the citizens of Polk County. Because of its success and the success of similar programs across the nation, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services expanded this program statewide to benefit Missourians.

The goals of the initiative are to: 1) enable consumers to easily identify and select healthy options when eating away from home, and 2) increase the number of healthier food options available in local restaurants. The program:

- Is voluntary.
- Directs consumers to healthy food choices identified using science-based nutrition criteria.
- Highlights those entrees that are lower in fat, calories and sodium and include components such as beans, whole grains, fruits or vegetables.
- Provides resources, ideas and tools for food establishments to offer healthier menu options.
- Uses the Live Well logo on menus, doors, menu inserts, brochures and table tents.
- Serves to increase consumer demand for healthy restaurant items.

The Start of Live Well

In collaboration with Roy Blunt YMCA of Bolivar, Live Well coalition members worked to complete the Community Healthy Living Index. The Index revealed “Fast Food Alley,” a string of national fast food chains along the main street in Bolivar. Recognizing that many community members, as well as visitors to the community were eating in these places, the coalition agreed there was a need to provide healthier nutrition options where people “on-the-go” could still make better food choices.

In Missouri, nearly one in three young people are overweight or obese.

INTRODUCTION CONT.

Restaurants that join the program will receive help meeting program guidelines, free in-store marketing materials, free advertising in the community and at sponsored events, and special recognition from the local legislative body. Environmental health officers (i.e., restaurant inspectors) and citizen reports will monitor restaurant compliance.

We have designed this toolkit to help you implement the Live Well Restaurant program in your local area. This guide provides a step-by-step process for implementation, including the certification criteria and application materials as well as recommendations for getting community buy-in and marketing.

By implementing the Live Well Restaurant program you will:

- Enter into partnerships with restaurants
- Provide low-cost access to nutritional analysis of menu items*
- Provide training to restaurant managers/owners
- Support restaurant owners in promoting the Live Well program
- Market the Live Well brand with point-of-sale materials and advertising guidelines for participating restaurants

*Nutrition analysis is discussed further in the section called "Getting Started." Each program will need to decide how they want to assist local restaurants with nutrient analysis of menu items.

Why Live Well Restaurants?

The need for interventions delivered through restaurants is established through reports such as the Resource Guide for Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases, developed by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. This report cites evidence of the dramatic increase in the consumption of food prepared away from the home in the United States and notes that frequent intake of foods eaten out has been associated with a diet high in fat and calories.

As anecdotal evidence, several restaurants have their own process for labeling healthier menu items, such as the "Guiltless" selections at Chili's or the Weight Watchers® items at Applebee's. Principles of business practice would suggest that these and other restaurant chains would not continue those promotions if they were not popular with some segment of their customer base. Unfortunately many smaller restaurants, including many mom and pop establishments, don't have the resources to provide such programs.

Improving diets and obesity rates requires many different policy strategies that address restaurant operations, nutrition literacy and social norms about eating. By investing public dollars in local businesses, healthy restaurant programs take a win-win-win approach to

Healthy restaurant programs take a win-win-win approach to improving community health.

INTRODUCTION CONT.

improving community health. Participating restaurants get free publicity and community support. Diners gain access to healthier food choices and information about nutrition. And public health departments create positive relationships with local businesses, which can lead to future collaboration to benefit the public's health. As with any public health intervention, a healthy restaurant program should be part of a larger chronic disease prevention framework that addresses all aspects of community health, from individual behavior change to policy change.

Why start a Live Well Restaurant program?

Public health advocates may choose this approach as a first step toward policies that institutionalize the community's desire to restrict access to less healthy food, such as zoning laws that prohibit new fast food restaurants and rules that set nutrition standards for children's meals with toys. Alternatively, advocates may want to use this program in conjunction with existing restaurant regulations, as a way to build relationships with restaurants. Rather than simply regulating restaurants to improve the nutritional quality of their menus, this program also incentivizes restaurants to serve healthy foods.

Benefits of Being a Live Well Restaurant

Restaurant partners will receive publicity highlighting their efforts to provide healthy, great tasting food as well as in-store promotional items including:

- *FREE artwork for use in advertising*
- *A plaque*
- *Window clings*
- *Table tents*
- *Menu inserts showcasing those items that meet the Live Well criteria*

Communities will have to decide how they want to recognize local restaurants that could include:

- *Adding the restaurant options to the Live Well website*
- *Advertising opportunities such as television and news print*
- *Recognizing restaurants at community and health focused events*
- *Posting messages using social media channels*



Advocates may want to use this program as a way to build relationships with restaurants.

RESTAURANTS AND THE LAW

Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FDCA)

Enacted in 1938, the FDCA generally prohibits the misbranding of food. In 1990, Congress amended the FDCA by adopting the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) to clarify and strengthen the legal authority of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to: 1) require general nutrition labeling on foods, specifying what and how nutritional information must be disclosed, and 2) establish the circumstances under which particular nutrient and health claims may be made about food.²

Most consumers are familiar with the general nutrition labeling requirements from the “Nutrition Facts” panels required on most packaged food. As described herein, some of the FDCA’s provisions now apply to restaurants.



Nutrition Labeling: Federal Calorie Disclosure Law

The 2010 health care reform bill (the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) amended the FDCA to add new nutrition disclosure requirements for certain restaurants and vending machines. The new law applies to restaurants, similar retail food establishments and vending machine operators that are part of a chain with 20 or more locations doing business under the same name (regardless of the type of ownership of the locations) and offering substantially the same menu items for sale.³ These chain restaurants must:

- List the number of calories for every standard menu item and suggest recommended total daily calorie intake on a menu, menu board or drive-through menu board.
- List the calories per serving next to each item if the food is provided at a salad bar, buffet, cafeteria or similar self-service facility (including self-service beverages).
- Make available (through a brochure, poster or other means) additional nutrition information, including the total number of calories; the number of calories derived from fat; the amounts of total fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates, complex carbohydrates, sugars, dietary fiber and total protein; and any additional nutrient information that the Secretary of Health and Human Services has identified as necessary for consumers to make healthy choices.⁴

New nutrition disclosure requirements apply for certain restaurants and vending machines.

RESTAURANTS AND THE LAW CONT.

On April 6, 2011, the FDA issued its proposed rule implementing the new law.⁵ The FDA will issue the final rule after reviewing the public comments to the proposed rule. The law expressly prohibits (or preempts) state and local governments from imposing any requirements for nutrition labeling that are not “identical to” the FDCA’s requirements for chain restaurants covered by the Act. That means states and cities may not require chain restaurants with 20 or more outlets to post any nutritional information on their menus that differs from what the FDCA requires.

State and local governments may still impose nutrition labeling requirements on restaurants that are not covered by the Act, but the law allows any restaurant, similar retail food establishment or vending machine operator with fewer than 20 locations to officially opt in to the federal law (and, therefore, opt out of any state or local law).

Restaurant recognition programs are unlikely to be preempted by the federal law. If restaurants choose to participate in these voluntary programs, such as Live Well Restaurants, they may be contractually bound to follow the program requirements. But because the programs are not mandatory, they do not impose a requirement that is likely to fall within the Act’s preemption clause.



Subway menu with calorie information.

State and local governments may still impose nutrition labeling requirements on restaurants that are not covered by the Act.

LIVE WELL RESTAURANT NUTRITION CRITERIA

Listed below are the Live Well Restaurant nutrition criteria. The criteria are based on the most current evidence in nutrition and science and support the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Therefore, the criteria identify foods and beverages that are appropriate for the majority of the population.

Restaurants must have a minimum of two menu items that meet the criteria. The criteria were adapted from the Healthy Dining Finder (http://www.healthydiningfinder.com/About-This-Site/about_restaurants) standards and tested through Polk County's Live Well Restaurant program. Changes to the criteria were made based on the findings from their project.

Entrees

(or full meals) must include one of the following:

- Fruits and/or non-starchy vegetables (at least ½ cup)
- Lean protein, skinless white meat poultry, fish, seafood, beef, pork, tofu, beans or eggs
- Only 100% whole grains

AND

Entrees

(or full meals) must have:

- Less than 751 calories
- Less than 26 grams of fat
- Less than 9 grams of saturated fat
- Less than 1050 milligrams of sodium
- May not be deep fried



Appetizers, Side Dishes and Desserts

must have:

- Less than 251 calories
- Less than 9 grams of fat
- Less than 4 grams of saturated fat
- Less than 251 milligrams of sodium
- May not be deep fried

Calories

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses 2,000 calories per day as a reference level for nutrition labeling. Live Well's upper limit of 750 calories for one meal represents about 37 percent of total calories for the day - reasonable, because a restaurant meal is generally the largest of the day.

Fat

Leading health organizations recommend that total fat be limited to 20 to 35 percent of calories. Assuming 2,000 calories per day, the recommended fat intake for a full day is between 44 and 78 grams. The Live Well fat guideline for one meal is 25 grams or fewer (or 30 percent of 750 calories).

Saturated Fat

Leading health organizations recommend that saturated fat be limited to 10 percent of total calories. Assuming 2,000 calories per day, the maximum recommended saturated fat intake for a full day would be 22 grams. Live Well's saturated fat guideline for one meal is set at 8 grams or less, again assuming the restaurant meal accounts for the largest of the day's meals.

Additional Criteria: 1) must be a smoke-free establishment and, 2) should consider buying local produce for use with restaurant specials.

STEP 1: Assemble Necessary Resources

This section will take you step by step through an overview of program essentials, including potential staffing needs and financial resources. A lot of your program's needs will depend on your outreach goal. The first step is to determine how many restaurants you want to recruit for the first year.

Staffing Recommendations

Your program's staffing needs will vary based on many factors, including how big you would like your program to be. While agencies vary in staff size and expertise, here are the types of positions that will be important for the program.

Program Coordinator

This person will be responsible for pulling together key staff, identifying necessary resources, developing an outreach strategy, and obtaining buy-in from the restaurant community. Similar programs report a minimum of three staff hours/week is necessary for every five participating restaurants.

Registered Dietitian (RD)

This person will assist with the nutritional analysis of menu items and provide consultation to restaurants. If your agency does not have an in-house RD, a Community Health Educator may be able to perform the nutritional analysis.

Environmental Health Staff Member

This person will serve as a liaison between the health department and restaurants. He or she will also inform other sanitarians of the program and encourage them to spread the word (even supply applications) when conducting inspections at restaurants and other food facilities.

Student Interns

Interns are a valuable addition to any agency. For this program, students rotating through your agency can assist with outreach to restaurants and conduct the required recipe analysis.

Financial Resources

There will be a small monetary commitment for implementing Live Well Restaurants.

Printing Costs

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will have available a limited supply of the printed promotional items for distributing to restaurants participating in the program. Your program may need to print additional menus, Live Well window clings, applications, program information and recognition materials. Please contact the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness to identify resources available.

Your outreach goal will determine your program's needs and resources.

STEP 2: Outreach and Application Assistance

Nutritional Analysis Software

The recipes restaurants submit with their application will need to be verified that they meet the program criteria. The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will have limited capacity to assist with this step. Nutritional analysis is discussed later in the toolkit, but your organization may consider buying its own menu analysis software or contracting with a local RD to perform the analysis. There are a number of available licensing options and reduced rates can be attained through partnering with a local non-profit organization, the school system or local restaurant groups (approximately \$900).

Postage

Your program will be responsible for mailing any needed communications with restaurants, such as application packets and other outreach materials.



After you have decided that you want to implement the Live Well Restaurant program and you have the necessary resources, the next step is to connect with your local restaurants. Outreach and application assistance go hand in hand, particularly to ensure that once you establish contact with interested restaurants you are seen as helpful and accessible throughout the process.

Outreach materials have been included with the toolkit for you to use; however, they will need to be modified with your agency contact information.

Ideas for Reaching Out to Restaurants

- Send out introductory letters explaining the Live Well program to all food permit holders. Even if a restaurant may not qualify when the letter is sent out, it is important to inform potential applicants about the program.
- Target restaurants that you think may already qualify.
- When thinking about potential restaurants, consider that chain restaurants are limited by their national approval for participation in local programs. In most cases, locally owned restaurants will be better targets for your program.
- Coordinate with Environmental Health staff to promote the program during their visits. Provide inspectors with application packets when they go out for routine inspections.

Target restaurants that you think may already qualify.

STEP 3: Determining Eligibility

Restaurants interested in becoming Live Well will need to submit an application packet.

These materials are included with the toolkit.

The application packet includes:

- Cover letter
- Program information/fact sheet
- Application
- Partnership agreement
- List of nutrition criteria

The application is a simple, one page application that asks for background information about the restaurant, contact information, a surface review of the nutritional information available and smoke free status. Restaurants will also need to submit a copy of their menu and recipes for any menu items they feel will qualify for a Live Well seal. Restaurants must have a minimum of two menu items that meet the criteria.

The Live Well program staff will review all applications received, including the menu and recipes. Your program may choose to require restaurants to have their menu items analyzed independently, taking the burden off of your staff; however, this may also decrease restaurant participation. Otherwise agency staff will need to work with applicants to complete an analysis. Restaurants, especially independently owned ones, may not have written recipes for their menu items. Your staff will need to work with the restaurant staff to develop a written recipe.

Polk County Recruitment

Restaurants were mailed a packet that included: an explanatory letter containing an invitation to participate, the nutritional criteria, a sodium brief, benefits to participating in the program, levels of achievement possible, and a participating restaurant return postcard. Restaurants interested in participating in the 'Live Well Restaurant' initiative were asked to contact the Polk County Health Center via return postcard or by phone within 60 days. Restaurants that did not respond were contacted by the Health Inspector or other Health Center staff, to discuss the Live Well Initiative as well as provide information on buying local produce from the Farmers' Market.

Making personal contact was the most effective way to get increased participation rates. Having a staff person on-site allows the restaurant owner/manager the opportunity to ask questions.

If you are working with chain restaurants, such as the Olive Garden, they may have their nutritional information posted on their website. If this is the case, utilize what they have posted to find menu items that meet the Live Well criteria.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services has limited capacity to assist with recipe analysis. Please contact the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness for more information (573-522-2820).

Restaurants, especially family owned, may not have written recipes for their menu items.

Example of Live Well Healthy Menu Items and Nutrition Criteria



This restaurant offers Live Well Restaurant menu items.

Live Well Menu Items	Healthy Menu Item 1	Healthy Menu Item 2	Healthy Menu Item 3
Calories			
Fat			
Saturated Fat			
Sodium			

Live Well Restaurant Nutrition Criteria

Entrees (or full meals) must include one of the following:

- fruits and/or vegetables
- lean protein, i.e., skinless white meat poultry, fish/seafood, tofu, etc.
- 100% whole grains

AND

Entrees (or full meals) must have:

- less than 751 calories and
- less than 26 grams of fat and
- less than 9 grams of saturated fat
- less than 1,040 mg of sodium

Appetizers, side dishes and desserts must have:

- less than 251 calories and
- less than 9 grams of fat and
- less than 4 grams of saturated fat
- less than 251 mg of sodium

None of the above food items may be deep fried.

STEP 4: Notification of Live Well Status

After evaluating the recipes submitted, it is time to notify the restaurants that are accepted into the program. If possible, program staff should hand deliver the acceptance packet to the restaurant. It is a good idea to meet face-to-face with the restaurant owner or contact after receiving and reviewing their application. This will give your staff the opportunity to visit the restaurant and start building a relationship with the owner/contact. The acceptance packet should contain the following components. Samples of these items are included in the toolkit.

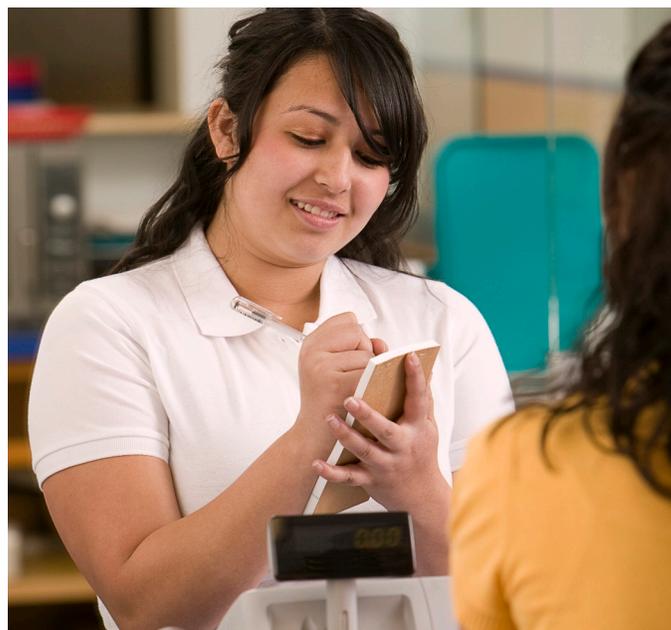
- Congratulatory letter from the local health officer
- Certificate signed by the local health officer and/or a plaque
- Window cling to display on restaurant's front window
- Menu inserts of approved Live Well options
- Table tents with Live Well nutrition criteria

Topics to discuss with the restaurant contact at this initial meeting include:

- How to use the in-house promotional materials
- Plans for how they would like to promote the Live Well status
- Future evaluation requirements
- Signing the partnership agreement
- Interest in adding additional Live Well dishes to their menus

If recipes or menu items submitted do not meet the criteria, offer suggestions on how to alter them to meet the criteria.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services may have some marketing materials available for recognizing local restaurants. Please call the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness for more information (573-522-2820). You may need to modify the templates if certain items are not available.



Most chain restaurants have the nutritional information for menu items posted on their website.

STEP 5: Promotion

Polk County's Tips for Working with Restaurant Owners

The key to working with restaurant owners is to start where they are and work toward improvement. One success Polk County experienced was when they noticed their local restaurant inspector promoted the program as well as connected restaurant owners with local resources to improve their menu nutritional standards. Personal contact as well as providing support and resources is vital to the success of any initiative.

- Create partnerships. Local restaurants have partnered with the farmers' market to get fresh produce to prepare their recipes.
- Restaurant owners are very busy so meeting with them on their time is important. Respecting their schedule by combining visits with the inspection allows for their input and feedback.



In-Restaurant Placement and Marketing

Restaurants who qualify will receive table tents with nutritional criteria for display on tables, window clings to be posted on entrance doors and menu inserts that list their Live Well menu item(s). Additionally, they can be given information to post at the register, if applicable for point of decision prompts.

Program Marketing

A major selling point for becoming a Live Well Restaurant is the opportunity for restaurants to be promoted throughout the community. There are many ways restaurants can be recognized. These include:

- ***Websites and social media.*** Participating restaurants will be added to the state Live Well website. Consider creating your own county Live Well website and/or Facebook page to highlight your local restaurants too. Local partners, such as a hospital, may be willing to also promote the Live Well program on their website.
- ***Press releases.*** Live Well programs are encouraged to submit press releases to the local paper and media outlets. A sample press release is included in the toolkit.
- ***Printed material.*** Create and distribute a Live Well Restaurant dining guide.
- ***Media events.*** Hold a press conference at one of the Live Well Restaurant locations. Invite all certified restaurant owners, managers and workers to attend as well as

Program staff should hand deliver the acceptance packet to the restaurant owner and staff.

STEP 5: Promotion cont.

other important people who were part of “initial buy-in.”

- **Recognition ceremonies.** Organize an annual award banquet for all Live Well Restaurants or add time to recognize them to an event already occurring.
- **Paid advertisements.** If your program budget allows, consider taking out an ad in a local paper to congratulate participating restaurants.
- In addition, restaurant owners are encouraged to produce their own in- and out-of store promotion and campaigns highlighting their participation.

Beyond Initial Recognition

It is important to stay in touch with participating restaurants throughout the year. Schedule a quarterly or biannual call or visit. At a minimum, follow-up with each restaurant as they approach one year in the program as they will need to reapply if they would like to continue participating in the program. Keep an electronic spreadsheet with participants and their recertification dates. It is a good idea to send a reminder letter one month in advance of the restaurant’s anniversary date. Keeping the communication channels open will help your program grow stronger and increase the program’s impact on the community. Your evaluation component will help you gauge progress and the readiness of your participants to expand their Live Well menu options.

Keys to Program Success

The following items have been identified as important factors for program success.

- Input from diverse stakeholders about the implementation/outreach and media promotion of the program.
- Utilizing partners to raise awareness of the program.
- Allowing restaurants to market themselves as a “Live Well Restaurant.”
- Providing analysis of menu items to ensure participating restaurants actually meet the criteria.
- Working with restaurants on ways to adjust menu items to meet the nutrition criteria.
- Growing the program—Expandability of the program to schools, cafeterias and other public places.



Example of the Polk County Health Center Live Well Restaurant marketing.

Promote Live Well Restaurants through social media and local media outlets.

GENERAL TIPS FOR WORKING WITH RESTAURANTS

View restaurants and restaurant associations as partners.

Any intervention or change will be stronger if both parties work together.

- Partner with a local chapter of the Missouri Restaurant Association.
- Associations can advertise your program in a newsletter that goes out to all members.
- Restaurants or local restaurant association members can sit on a committee that is discussing nutrition initiatives in restaurants.

Have a plan.

- Set appointments for no more than 20-30 minutes long. Managers have tight schedules.
- Be precise and get to the point. What, when, where, how and who? How much, if appropriate!
- Plan for long lead times, especially for large chains. Smaller, regional chains and independent restaurants usually have quicker turn around.
- What resources can your agency bring to the partnership?
- What do you expect from the restaurant or restaurant association?
- Define next steps, such as expectations, responsibilities and deadlines.

Find the common denominators.

Public health and hospitality industry professionals have overlap in their interests.

- Both want to make the customer happy.
- Both enjoy people and food.
- Both want what is good for the customer.
- Both have a lifestyle of service.
- Both agree taking part in community activities is important.

- Both want to increase the amount of people eating healthy foods (increase customer base, change the norm in restaurants, increase overall health).
- Both feel public perception is important.
- On an individual level, many managers and workers are interested in being healthy.

Understand the differences.

Both public health and industry professionals should make the effort to work collaboratively to understand barriers of each side.

- Each has unique challenges.
- The goals are different, but not as different as it seems. Public health works to increase health of the public; the hospitality industry works to make the customer happy.

Offer a “hook.”

- Show the restaurant manager a benefit, such as increased sales or customer traffic, press coverage of activities, or offer a free service, such as nutrition analysis.
- Share ideas and tips to make healthy products more appealing to customers.
- Highlight examples of successful healthy options in other community restaurants.
- Highlight the importance of offering nutritious foods to the community’s well-being—the community connection.
- Share results of a community survey indicating that the community is interested in healthier options or menu labeling at restaurants.
- Hold a large community event highlighting participating restaurants.

STEP 6: Evaluation

Evaluation is an essential component of the Live Well program. There are two evaluation tools included in the toolkit. The first is a patron survey, which assesses patrons' knowledge of the program and satisfaction with healthy menu options offered. Restaurants should make the patron survey available to all customers after starting the Live Well program. The second tool is a restaurant survey, which asks about: 1) the ease of the application process, and 2) the need/desire for increased marketing of the Live Well status.

Restaurants should be surveyed about six months after starting the Live Well program. The state health department will ask for a summary of the results to assess impact of the program.

In addition to surveying your restaurants and their patrons, you will want to keep track of the number of establishments enrolled in the program. If program participants are willing to provide information on sales of healthy menu items, that should be collected as well.

Endnotes

1. National Restaurant Association. 2013 Restaurant Industry Pocket Factbook. Accessed August 2013 from www.restaurant.org.
2. Noll-Kalay H, Fry C, Ackerman A, and Chen L. "Putting Health on the Menu: A Toolkit for Creating Healthy Restaurant Programs." National Policy and Legal Analysis Network, 2012. Accessed from www.nplan.org.
3. 30 21 U.S.C. § 343(q)(5)(H)(i).
4. 31 21 U.S.C. § 343(q)(5)(H)(ii).
5. 76 Fed. Reg. 66 (April 6, 2011).

Polk County Findings

In its second year, Polk County's program had 15 participating restaurants, with three of them being new to the program. Polk County conducted interviews with participating restaurants to evaluate their program. They assessed the program's impact, impact on the community, keys to success, and barriers to participation. Coalition partners shared responsibility for contacting the restaurants.

A survey of the original 23 restaurants showed that mailing materials was less effective than a personal visit. As a result of participation, restaurant owners reported that they have happy customers, and more customers are ordering healthier items and utilizing the salad bar. They stated that the marketing resources – table tents, window clings and stickers/plaque have drawn attention to and communicated the healthier items on their menu.

Barriers the restaurant owners mentioned were lack of local control as promotion of specific menu items was a corporate decision (for chain restaurants); needing more direct assistance with how to adjust current menu items to meet criteria; and they would like a systematic process for providing and organizing customer feedback. The impact on the restaurant was recorded through increased traffic, patrons asking about Live Well items, and/or increased sales. The impact on the community was measured via assessment of healthier food options being ordered and/or healthier eating behaviors.

Surveys are important to the evaluation process.



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Bureau of Community Health and Wellness
573-522-2820

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER
Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

