

Title of Intervention: The Employee Blood Pressure and Cholesterol Education Program

Intervention Strategies: Campaigns and Promotions, Supportive Relationships, Environments and Policies

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase awareness of blood pressure and cholesterol levels

Population: Employees

Setting: Large medical center in Chicago, Illinois; worksite-based

Partners: Volunteer counselors from various departments in the medical center

Intervention Description:

- Campaigns and Promotions: Printed literature was available on diet, including food preparation, sodium, cholesterol, saturated fats, recommended diets and food substitutes. Displays concerning popular foods, heart health videos, and information about Employee Health Service's Health and Fitness program were placed throughout the worksite.
- Supportive Relationships: Individual counseling was available for all participants. Counselors reviewed each participant's data and determined which risk factors were modifiable. They suggested behavioral modifications that could be made without unrealistic lifestyle changes. During the course of this 5-7 minute interactive dialogue, counselors offered practical advice and answered questions. Counselors discussed with individuals the steps within his or her capability. Participants with elevated blood pressure or cholesterol levels were counseled to see their personal health care providers.
- Environments and Policies: Management agreed to allow staff to leave their jobs to be screened. Employees working at remote sites could take advantage of this opportunity at satellite screening posts. Screening was conducted at staggered starting times to provide availability to third shift staff.

Theory: None mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Volunteer counselors
- Training: A counselor training session explained the program's logistics, goals, methods and the recommended guidelines for risk level determination
- Technology: Not mentioned
- Space: Space to conduct screenings and counselor sessions
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Newsletters, posters, table tents, lectures, screening tools (blood pressure devices, figure stick cholesterol tests), printed literature on CVD risk factors
- Evaluation: Screening tools, comprehensive health risk assessment survey, survey drop-off box

Evaluation:

- Design: Cohort
- Methods and Measures:
 - Screening for blood pressure and total serum cholesterol level
 - Comprehensive health risk assessment survey documented blood pressure, cholesterol status, and gathered information on cardiovascular risk factors, including smoking, diet and exercise
 - Compliance with medical follow-up if referred

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Nearly two thirds of the highest risk population saw their primary health care provider after the screening. Individuals reported positive lifestyle modifications in exercise, diet and smoking. Participants had significant changes in eating behaviors. There were notable decreases in intake for meat, ice cream and fried foods. Some also reported a slight decrease in salt added at the table. There was a slight decrease in participants who reported smoking. Overall, total mean cholesterol levels decreased. Participants with borderline or high cholesterol levels showed a

significant decrease. Participants with elevated blood pressure levels showed a decrease in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure levels.

- Long Term Impact: Not mentioned

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Though the findings were limited by selection bias and a high attrition rate, they suggest that worksite screening programs combined with immediate screening results, educational counseling regarding risk reduction, health care provider referral and follow-up surveying may influence significant serum cholesterol and blood pressure reductions in high-risk individual hospital employees.

Citation(s):

Baier, C. A., C. J. Grodzin, et al. (1992). "Coronary risk factor behavior change in hospital personnel following a screening program." *Am J Prev Med* 8(2): 115-122.