

The Clinical Staff Health-Smart Behavior Program

Dr. Carolyn M. Tucker, Principal Investigator, University of Florida

The Clinical Staff Health-Smart Behavior (HSB) Program is an employment site-based health promotion program to increase health-smart behaviors (physical activity and healthy eating behaviors) among health care clinical staff members.

Program Objectives

The specific short-term objectives of the Clinical Staff HSB Program are as follows:

- (1) To train a team of health care clinical staff to serve as Health Empowerment Coaches who implement the Clinical Staff HSB Program with their peers.
- (2) To demonstrate the effectiveness of the Health-Empowerment Coach implemented Clinical Staff HSB Program in significantly (a) decreasing participating peer clinical staff members' BMI and blood pressure, and (b) increasing and sustaining their health-smart behaviors.
- (3) To train the Health Empowerment Coaches who implement the Clinical Staff HSB Program to be trainers who train other clinical staff to be Health Empowerment Coaches.

The long-term objective of the Clinical Staff HSB Program is to assess the impact of this program on the health-smart behaviors and health outcomes of patients of the clinical staff who participate in the program.

Program Implementation

The Clinical Staff HSB Program involves implementing and evaluating the hospital-adapted version of the evidence-based Health-Smart Behavior Program – a program that has been shown to be effective in reducing BMI and blood pressure and in increasing health-smart behaviors of participants at YMCAs and church sites. The central components of program implementation are (a) assessing the motivators of and barriers to health-smart behaviors among the target clinical staff and using this data to customize the training and motivational aspects of the program; (b) showing each of the six sections of the Family Health Self-Empowerment DVD (a cost-effective and time efficient tool for promoting health-smart behaviors) to clinical staff and facilitating their discussion of the DVD; (c) asking clinical staff to review the Health-Smart Behavior Resource Guide (which supplements and extends the DVD); (d) having clinical staff exercise on a regular basis, including during their work time, (e) assessing the health-smart behaviors, blood pressure, and BMI of the clinical staff program participants and their Health Empowerment Coaches at work prior to and following implementation of the program; and (e) training Health Empowerment Coaches and other program participants to be Health Empowerment Coach trainers, who in turn train future Health Empowerment Coaches; and (f) having health care clinical staff administrators show motivational support for clinical staff program participants by providing them with small tangible reinforcements (e.g., program participation pens and water bottles) and by publicly endorsing the program.

Potential Program Benefits

The potential benefits of the Clinical Staff HSB Program include significantly improved health status of health care clinic staff and their patients, and reduced health-related employee costs.