

WISEWOMAN Program Spotlight

Rhode Island WISEWOMAN Helps Participants Commit to Be Fit



COMMUNITY-CLINICAL LINKS



About four women die from heart disease and stroke in Rhode Island every day.¹ Nearly 92% of participants in the Rhode Island WISEWOMAN program have at least one risk factor for heart disease and stroke that can be changed: high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, or smoking. The program worked with Rhode Island's Community Health Network (CHN) to give these women access to proven lifestyle programs and community resources to help them prevent and control heart disease and stroke.

Opportunity

Nearly 82% of Rhode Island WISEWOMAN participants are overweight or obese. The Rhode Island Department of Health launched the CHN to provide a single access point for patients in need of chronic disease management. The CHN serves as a centralized point of referral through which health care providers can connect patients to more than 20 programs that address heart disease, diabetes, smoking, and other chronic issues.

Solution

By partnering with the CHN, Rhode Island WISEWOMAN can now give participants access to the YMCA, Weight Watchers, TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), Curves, Jazzercise, risk reduction counseling, and health coaching programs with certified educators. Most programs are offered at low or no cost and are available in both English and Spanish.

Results

Rhode Island WISEWOMAN participants were referred to proven lifestyle programs and community resources that help them stay active, eat well, and manage stress. From June 2014 through May 2016, 75% of women² enrolled in the Rhode Island WISEWOMAN program received CHN referrals. Of these referrals, 59% attended YMCA classes, and 34% participated in health coaching.

Sustaining Success

By using the CHN's existing referral system, Rhode Island WISEWOMAN avoided duplication of services and increased the program's chance of success. Rhode Island WISEWOMAN staff are also working with partners to closely follow participants and make reminder calls to lower the rate of "no-shows." Updated information on Rhode Island's WISEWOMAN website keeps women informed about available sessions and how to register for programs.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mortality data based on WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Reports, 2009; state maps from the Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention; risk factor data from the BRFSS, 2010.

² More WISEWOMAN participants may have enrolled after this timeframe.

"Between swimming and the ability to walk farther with less discomfort, plus my dietary changes, I have safely lost over 50 pounds and was told I am no longer prediabetic. At this time last year, I was overweight, limping, and unhappy, but now I feel better than ever. It has been like getting younger instead of older!"

—Rhode Island WISEWOMAN Participant

Additional Information

For more information about Rhode Island WISEWOMAN, visit http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/detail.php?pgm_id=1001.

