

USU EXTENSION GRANT-FINAL REPORT

Project Leader: Cindy Nelson

Project Title: Community Wellness through Peer Coaching

Beginning Date and End Date: June 1, 2014-May 31, 2016

Total Requested: \$9,369

Project Objectives:

- Improve participant overall wellness using motivational interviewing techniques
- Participate in Community Wellness Coach Training provided by the University of Utah
- Hire and train a community wellness coach
- Conduct evaluation, analyze data, and report findings

Project Results:

A Community Wellness Coach was hired to work in Beaver County. The Community Wellness Coach and I were both trained by University of Utah personnel in motivational interviewing techniques, through face-to-face and online modules. We were also trained to use the REDCap data collection software. Due to some problems with IRB approval through the University of Utah, we could not begin recruiting participants and completing initial interviews until February 2015. This made it necessary to extend our grant for a two year period to complete the Community Wellness Coaching cycle.

Wellness coaches collected baseline data during participants' initial interviews using REDCap, an online research database. A total of 137 questions were asked about participants' demographic characteristics, knowledge, opinions, health behaviors, etc. Clinical health markers were also recorded.

Monthly individual coaching then began. Group activities were held bi-monthly, including: cooking and nutrition demonstrations, physical activity classes (yoga, hiking, hula hoop exercises, HIIT), a Fitbit challenge, and group coaching.

Impacts for participants were:

- Increased knowledge of the benefits of physical activity
- Increased fruit and vegetable consumption
- Successful attainment of other individualized health goals.

A poster (*Improving health equity through university community partnerships: Motivational-interview-based community wellness coaching in diverse rural and urban Utah communities*) was presented at the Active Living Research Conference held in Florida in February 2016. An abstract (*Identifying factors associated with perceived barriers to healthy behaviors in urban women of color and rural white women*) was submitted in February 2016 to present at the American Public Health Association meeting. An article (*Losing weight, shedding baggage: When it comes to health, people rely on community*) written by Daphne Chen, appeared in the Deseret News on April 10, 2016 describing the value of community wellness coaches. <http://m.deseretnews.com/article/865651948/Losing-weight-shedding-baggage-When-it-comes-to-health-people-rely-on-community.html> An additional article, *Time use and health*, is being prepared for submission to the Social Science and Medicine Journal.