

Cass County Board of Health: *Cass County Residents Achieve High Marks in Live Healthy Iowa Participation*

Summary: Nearly 250 Cass County residents recently concluded participation in the 2012 Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge program, held from January 23 to May 1, 2012. Cass County nearly doubled the numbers of residents participating from 2011. The program focuses on physical activity and other healthy habits.

Challenge: Cass County's obesity rate is climbing and the numbers of active residents are declining. The Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings note that 31% of Cass County residents reported a BMI greater than 30 in 2011, and 36% in 2012. Additionally, 28% of Cass County residents reported no leisure time physical activity in the 2012 report, compared to 25% for the Iowa average. The national benchmark is 21%.

Solution: Cass County has long participated in Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge, but its participation has waned in recent years. The Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge is a great resource, available at a reasonable cost, and the Healthy Cass County coalition determined it would be appropriate to attempt to increase participation, building upon the interest from the employers in Iowa's Blue Zones initiative. During our Blue Zones application process, the coalition identified several employers that signaled an interest in improving employee health and wellness; this provided a natural segway to Live Healthy Iowa participation.

Results: Upon review of Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge participation, Healthy Cass County members agreed the initiative resulted in success, with sound opportunities for the future. Overall participation by Cass County residents increased by 68% from 2011 to 2012. The number of Cass County teams nearly doubled, from 19 to 34. Participants increased their average BMI reduction from .84 in 2011 to 2.17 in 2012. Ten of the worksite teams averaged 30 minutes or more of activity per day per member. Live Healthy Iowa estimates the return on investment in 2012 at \$94,215.

Future Directions: Healthy Cass County desires to continue growth in the participation of Cass County residents in the Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge, as well as other Live Healthy Iowa programs. One day, we hope to see fewer obese residents and more active residents in the County Health Rankings. Our continued work with Blue Zones and the Community Transformation Grant has produced even more employers interested in improving the health and wellness of their employees. We believe one contributor to our success is the dedication of promotion via several avenues to impact enrollment, and then continued attention during the campaign to ensure ongoing participation. We have discussed creating more local competition among teams, as well as encouraging teams from churches, social groups, etc. as a part of our CTG work. Iowa has a great resource in Live Healthy Iowa!

Cerro Gordo County Board of Health: *Healthy Catering at Worksite Meetings and Events*

Summary: The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health voluntarily began researching and drafting a healthy foods meeting policy which would entail Health Department sponsored meetings and events to feature healthy food options. The policy draft, supplemented with a catering directory highlighting the “healthy” menu selections is the third written wellness practice implemented since the Health Department launched the County Wellness Program in 2010. The first two initiatives allow employees to flex their work breaks to provide more time over the lunch period for wellness activities and also provide 60 minutes paid time to complete annual fitness screenings with wellness staff.

Challenge: The biggest challenge in drafting the healthy meetings policy was identifying healthy menu options offered by caterers the Health Department currently orders. Many of the caterers are operated by small shops, which do not always have nutritional information readily available.

Solution: To identify the healthier menu selections, the Health Department used the NEMS-Vending and Restaurant criteria, along with verbiage and criteria cited in other sample nutrition policies adopted by other businesses and organizations throughout the country.

Results: The nutrition policy, along with the supplemental catering directory was added to the Cerro Gordo Department of Public Health Employee Handbook.

Future Direction: The Health Department will educate other county departments on this model to increase the impact of the initiative.

Decatur County Board of Health: *Success Story at the South Central Iowa Theatre in Leon, Iowa*

On Friday, Saturday, and Sundays, the local theatre is open in Decatur County. South Central Iowa Theatre is located on the square in Leon, Iowa. Families come from all over the county to enjoy the newest releases on the big screen and enjoy a snack from the concession stand.

The theatre owner has always given the customers what they desired. The concession stand provided over 20 different types of candy bars and 12 different types of drinks of various sizes. The Decatur County CTG coordinator met with the theatre owner and analyzed her concession using the Nutrition Environment Measurement Survey for Vending (NEMS-V).

Families frequent the local theatre most often. After assessing the concession stand only 8% of the snacks provided met the yellow or green status and 12% of the beverages made the acceptable NEMS-V criteria. The theater manager, with the assistance of the Decatur County CTG Coordinator, changed the concession menu and substituted healthier options to see how they would sell over the summer and fall of 2012.

In late June, after the analysis, Decatur County offered suggestions of cutting back on providing so many snack options and sticking with the basic candy bars popular in this area and to limit the beverages to fountain soda, in one size only. The beverages were originally 21oz. fluid ounces, and it was recommended to decrease to a 12 ounce size. Decatur County CTG coordinator also suggested adding freeze-dried apples and granola bars.

The South Central Iowa Theatre made some great changes. They have 42% healthy snacks and 46% healthy beverages now available to customers. One big change in the beverages is there are only fountain beverages available in 12oz cups. Another change is an elimination of over half of the candy bars and introduction of three healthier options.

In the fall the CTG coordinator will follow up with the South Central Iowa Theatre to see how the healthier options went over within the concession stand. A comparison will be conducted to view the revenue and the effects the changes have had in the theatre. Decatur County CTG will continue to work with the theatre and provide any support needed in the months to come.

Marion County Board of Health: *Nutrition Environment Measures Vending Survey for Pella Aquatic Center*

Summary: With the summer pool season approaching, the Pella Aquatic's center approached the Marion County Wellness Coalition in regards to having their concession stand evaluated to see what was considered healthy. With the support of the Marion County Health Department and the Community Transformation Grant Coordinators, a NEMS-V assessment was administered at the Pella Aquatic Center in the spring of 2012.

Challenge: The majority of the Pella Community who frequent the Aquatic Center is from the youth population; therefore, one of the best seller's at the concession stand is ice cream and candy which in return brought the Aquatic Center good revenue. At the time of the NEMS-V assessment, the Aquatic Center only had 5 healthier options according to the NEMS-V assessment results, with only one option fitting under the "green" criteria. However, the Aquatic Center had the desire to change the concession stand menu and substitute in healthier options to see if they would sell over the summer of 2012.

Solution: In early spring of 2012, before the Aquatic Center opened, Marion County CTG Coordinator's met with the Aquatic Center manager and current vendor who filled the concession stand and together they came up with some healthier options they could substitute in for some of the current "red" items. The goal was to get as close to 30 percent of healthy options in the concession stand as possible.

Results: Pella Aquatic Center made some great changes. One big change was that they swapped out all of their "regular" chips for baked chips, which fit under the "yellow" criteria according to NEMS-V. They are also offering single serving Gold Fish, 100 calorie packs as well as fresh apples with a single serving of peanut butter. An analysis revealed that the Pella Aquatic Center went from 9 percent of healthy options to 21 percent which equals a 12 percent change.

Future Directions: At the end of summer the CTG coordinators will follow up with the Pella Aquatic center to see how the healthier options went over within the concession stand. A comparison will be done to determine the revenue made in 2011 and 2012 to see if the healthier options had any effect on revenue. CTG coordinators will continue to work with the Aquatic Center and the current vendor to try and reach the goal of 30 percent of healthy options offered in the concession stand which meets the criteria for NEMS-V.

Page County Board of Health: *Eaton Corporation overhauls cafeteria.*

Summary: The Eaton Corporation Wellness Team took a long look at what was offered in their traditional cafeteria and vending machines, and with the support of their corporate and local plant managers they decided to make a change. In March of 2012, Page County Public Health completed a Nutrition Environment Measurement Survey for Vending (NEMS-V) and assessed that fewer than 30 percent of foods being served met the NEMS healthy choice criteria. Eaton's wellness initiative has a goal that 80 percent of food choices to meet healthy food standards. With the survey results at hand, Eaton Corporation Shenandoah made significant changes.

Challenge: The NEMS-V results from one traditional food vending machine were 10 percent yellow choices and no green choices. Eaton Corporation in late 2011 adopted an 80 percent-20 percent healthy food options policy through their wellness initiative.

Solution: Eaton Corporation has an 80 percent healthy food choices policy and used this when talking and negotiating with several vending companies. The wellness team toured and researched options and decided on a vendor and decided they will no longer have the traditional "hot lunch" cafeteria.

Results: Eaton Corporation decided with the major overhaul in food choices, they would also remodel their cafeteria. Remodeling the cafeteria incorporates the managing stress pillar, another of the wellness pillars outlined in Eaton's policies. It will allow their employees to escape from the work setting and relax in the calming new break area. They are making a comfortable place for their employees to enjoy their lunch break while eating a more nutritious meal.

Future Directions: Page County Public Health will tour the new cafeteria after it is completed. The CTG coordinator will complete a follow up NEMS-V assessment and will continue to maintain the working relationship with Eaton Corporation wellness team for future worksite wellness projects.

Polk County Board of Health: *Local Child Care Implements a Wellness Program*

Wellness is a term that has been around for a while, but has been gaining popularity again due to the rising costs associated with health care. Smaller firms in Iowa with fewer than 50 employees do not have the same resources as many of the larger employers do. These resources enable the larger companies to embrace wellness and prevention as an important part of their health approach.

Hispanic Educational Resources (HER) is a small business in the Des Moines area which has some advantages in place to create a wellness program. First: because of their size, it is easier and simpler to make a systems-level or environmental change. They do not have a large bureaucracy that needs to approve changes. Secondly: it is easier to implement smaller initiatives that can affect the majority of the employees.

HER is looking for easy and inexpensive strategies they can concentrate their efforts to determine how to promote a healthy environment for their employees.

HER is working with the staff at the Polk County Health Department (PCHD) to prepare for the voluntary implementation of some policies to make a more productive workforce by targeting specific strategies that keep HER employees well.

Healthy eating and physical activity are associated with prevention and management of chronic diseases. HER are researching the following wellness program:

- having a water fountain to promote the consumption of water and make this available throughout the day
- offering flexible work hours to allow physical activity during the day and implement incentive-based programs to encourage physical activity, such as a collective membership at a local gym
- providing individuals with health screening as a part of their annual physical
- supporting a policy prohibiting tobacco use anywhere on property

The PCHD representative will continue to work with Hispanic Educational Resources to assist with the components listed above for the creation of a supportive healthy environment. Part of creating this environment is to clearly define the organization's expectation regarding health behaviors and implementation of voluntary policies that promote health and reduce risk of disease.

Poweshiek County Board of Health: *The ups and downs of Nutrition Environment Measures Vending Survey at Grinnell Regional Medical Center*

Summary: Grinnell Regional Medical Center (GRMC) participated in a Nutrition Environment Measures Vending Survey (NEMS-V) assessment. That same year, a policy was voluntarily created that committed to meeting the gold standard of at least 50 percent “yellow” or “green” items in all machines. Secondary assessments were performed which determined that the gold standard was not being met.

Challenge: The Medical Center strives to be a leader in health prevention initiatives. There was a previous commitment to meeting a higher percentage of healthier choices in the vending machines. However, a new assessment determined that this standard was not being met in all machines. The vendor was contacted by the director of dining services and she was assured that the vending would be improved over the course of one month. It seemed like a win was already achieved. However, after that month passed an additional assessment showed that no machines improved and one had an even lower percentage of healthy choices available to employees, patients and visitors. It was argued by some that vending machines near ICU should have plenty of candy available for visitor’s stress relief.

Solution: The vending machine policy was reviewed by the worksite wellness committee and it was determined that all machines needed to meet the gold standard no matter the location.

When the second follow-up assessment showed no improvements, the expectation was set that machines with low percentage of healthy choices would be brought up to at least a bronze standing.

Results: It was determined that an ice cream machine would never meet the “gold standard” and the entire machine was removed from the hospital. The current vendor agreed to put healthier choices in the machines.

Future directions: GRMC will continue to monitor the items available in the vending machines. Post assessments will be completed by the CTG team each year.

Ringgold County Board of Health: *Small Steps Make a Big Difference*

Summary: Ringgold County Public Health worked with the Ringgold County Courthouse to implement a motivational StairWELL poster campaign encouraging individuals to participate in physical activity during the work day. This environmental change provides increased awareness and opportunity for physical activity to help prevent obesity, heart disease, and type 2 diabetes.

Challenge: In Mount Ayr, IA, the Courthouse is home to one of only two entertaining elevators in rural Ringgold County. Kids especially love a special ride in the elevator, and many adults use it simply because it is available. The Board of Supervisors aimed to motivate employees and visitors to move up the stairs in an effort to help community members be more active and reduce health care costs. Presently, one in three adults is physically inactive and nearly a third of the population reports being obese according to the 2012 County Health Rankings.

Solution: Ringgold County Public Health worked with the county Board of Supervisors to develop an engaging sign promotion to educate courthouse visitors and employees about the benefits of using the stairs. Twelve motivational posters were developed and printed. The signs were strategically placed around the three floors and on stairwell landings to encourage using the stairs. Messages included health benefits, motivational statements, and suggestions to skip the elevator and enter the free fitness zone.

Siouxland District Board of Health: *Local Factory Works to Improve Their Nutrition Environment for the Health of Its Employees*

Summary: In the spring of 2012, after completion of the CHANGE Tool assessment for Palmer Candy Company, the company decided to evaluate their nutrition environment in both facilities located in Sioux City, IA using the Nutritional Environment Measures Survey for Vending (NEMS-V) machines. Siouxland District Health Department was able to administer the assessment on vending machines at both locations. A NEMS-V tool-kit and recommendations for change were presented to administration at Palmer Candy Company and to the contracted vendor. SDHD was then able to help facilitate changes and ultimately increase the percentage of healthy vending options in the machines. Increasing the percentage of healthy options was not the only change seen by employees. The snack machines now contain yellow product pushers so employees can easily identify which options are healthier.

Challenge: Since the vending machines are the employees main source of food, the products sell quickly but the environment in which the machines were located were not taken into consideration when healthier options were added. One snack machine, located in an interior hallway of a factory near the peanut roaster, had unusually high internal temperatures. This caused some of the products to melt. This issue was only noticed when the NEMS-V re-assessment was conducted. SDHD notified both Palmer Candy Company and the vending company of the issue.

Solution: The vendor is currently analyzing options for the location of that particular machine. The machine will either be moved to the breakroom nearby or it is going to be replaced with a combination refrigerated machine and then additional healthier options will be added to the machine.

Results: With the results of the initial assessment conducted in April 2012, one out of seven machines met the criteria for a bronze award and 19 percent of all products in the machines were healthy options (yellow or green coded products). At the time of reassessment, three machines received a bronze award and the percentage of healthy options was 30 percent for a total increase of 11 percent.

Future Directions: Over the course of the next several months, Siouxland District Health Department will continue to work with both the vending company and Palmer Candy Company to increase the percentage of healthy items in the machine, add NEMS-V point of decision prompting near all machines, and if requested will provide assistance with the development of a healthy vending policy.

Van Buren County Board of Health: *Villages Taking on the Challenge*

Summary: Through the Community Transformation grant program, Healthy Village staff promoted the Live Healthy Iowa 100 Day Wellness Challenge. During the 2011 Challenge, nine residents of Van Buren County were enrolled in the Live Healthy Iowa program. In 2012, that number jumped to 134 adult participants on 21 teams and 625 youth in the Live Healthy Iowa Kids program. Our success was county-wide, with five Villages and three worksites having teams.

Challenge: Our challenge was to promote the program in a way that would reach and motivate the residents. We knew we needed our residents not only to join but also to stay motivated to meet their individual goals and successfully complete the program. We identified our challenge as marketing the program to reach all ages and developed a plan to target the school, youth, adults, elderly, and working adults.

Solution: Healthy Villages' Community Wellness Advisory committee met with the Live Healthy Iowa Outreach Coordinator for direction on promoting the program in the county. The staff of Healthy Villages and the Healthy Villages Community Wellness Advisory members encouraged residents to enroll in the program and to stick with the program for the full 100 days. Participants were encouraged through the Healthy Villages website, emails, weekly newspaper articles and posters at work sites. Sign-up events were held throughout the county and at worksites. A county-wide "End of the Challenge" success event was held in which residents shared their successes and set new goals to continue their lifestyle changes.

Results: As a result of focused efforts in increasing the enrollment this program, Van Buren County experienced a dramatic increase in program enrollees compared with 2011 enrollment numbers. The success was not only seen in the enrollment but also in the number of participants who successfully completed the program. Adults lost a total of 326 pounds and logged 5,270 minutes of activity during the challenge period.

Future Directions: Our Healthy Villages Coalition the results of this year's challenge and plans to work on strategies to increase our numbers next year.