Program approved by AoA and NCOA

Website: www.projectenhance.org
Year Program First Implemented in Community Settings: 1997

Program Synopsis

- General description of program
  - EnhanceWellness is an individualized, community-based wellness intervention designed to promote the health and functioning of older adults at risk of functional decline. The intervention was designed to identify potentially modifiable risk factors for disability and promote behavior change to reverse those risk factors. Typically a nurse, social worker, or community health worker work with the individual to develop a plan and support and encourage him/her in achieving the goals of that plan.

- Program goal
  - The goal of the program is to maintain or increase the health and functional status of community-based older adults with chronic conditions.

- Reasoning behind the program design and elements
  - Predictors of disability such as chronic disease, physical inactivity, and social isolation can be modified to reduce susceptibility to functional decline (Buchner & Wagner, 1992).

- Target population
  - Older adults with one or more chronic conditions, excluding dementia. The program has not been tested for homebound older adults.

- Essential program components and activities
  - The program happens in three steps: Screen, Plan, and Action
    - **Screen:** The participant completes a detailed health questionnaire comprising validated health measures. Examples of the health areas measured are confidence to exercise, confidence to manage health issues and work with physicians, physical activity, socialization, depression and anxiety, weight and nutrition, fall history and risk, smoking and alcohol use, use of psychotropic and other medications, and memory. The data is entered into the EnhanceWellness WellWare software program, which analyzes the data.
    - **Plan:** A Health Action Plan, developed by the participant with the help of EnhanceWellness staff, focuses on areas of health risk that the participant chooses to work on. EnhanceWellness staff are trained in motivational interviewing and behavior change and are ready to assist the participant to clarify goals and address motivational challenges. Specific tasks are
defined, which will help the participant work toward meeting his or her health goals.

- **Action:** The participant moves into action with the support of the EnhanceWellness team and/or trained volunteer health mentor who offer ongoing encouragement, support, and feedback. The team helps with problem-solving, health education, and referral to support groups and additional services, including individual and family counseling, if indicated, over an enrollment period of six months. At the end of six months, the participant completes another questionnaire. WellWare compares the responses to the participant’s original questionnaire and provides immediate feedback to the participant on his or her success, not only in the areas he or she chooses to work on but also in all areas of health measured. At this point, the participant may choose to continue with the program, working on the same health issue or a new one, or he or she may choose to graduate.

- **Length/Timeframe of program**
  - The individualized part of the program continues from enrollment to six months; participants may continue to participate after the initial six month period.
  - Support group meetings are held weekly to monthly. Groups begin when the social worker or nurse finds that people have a specific need (such as loss). Some support groups are health and disease focused; some are social work models. There is an option for either group or individual interventions. The groups are open to anyone, with the focus on behavioral and motivational interviewing.

- **Recommended class size**
  - Support groups are not mandatory; the typical group size is 6-15 participants.

- **Desired outcomes of EnhanceWellness**
  - Decreased hospital days
  - Decreased use of psychoactive drugs
  - Decreased depression
  - Increased physical activity
  - Increased confidence in managing one’s health

- **Measures and evaluation activities**
  - EnhanceWellness uses standardized, validated outcome measures to track the progress of participants as they move through the program. Success is measured by comparing a participant’s questionnaire responses at the beginning of the program to his or her responses to the same questionnaire 6 months later. A participant is successful if he or she maintains or improves in any of the areas of measurement that he or she has chosen to work on, but often participants improve/maintain in other areas at the same time.
  - Areas of measurement include:
    - Self-rating of health
    - Confidence to talk with physician
Social activity
Alcohol use
Smoking
Depression
Anxiety
Physical activity/readiness to exercise
Mobility
Nutrition
BMI
Falls history and risk
Use of prescription medications
Use of psychotropic medications
Medical care utilization
Memory
Cognitive impairment

Health Outcomes and Evidence Supporting Health Outcomes
• 80% maintain or improve in their chosen issue (S. Synder, personal communication, October 13, 2006)
• 72% decrease in hospital days (Leveille, 1998)
• 35% reduction in psychoactive medications (Leveille, 1998)
  • 11% decrease in depression (Phelan et al., 2002)

Program Costs
• Program license fee: $3,000
• Annual program license renewal fee: $50
• Annual Wellware software license fee: $200 per counselor (not applicable if the counselor has already obtained a Wellware software license for the PEARLs program)

Program Savings
• Reduction of 83 hospital days in the intervention group, yielding a savings approximately $1,200/year per participant (Leveille, 1998).

Resource Requirements
• Facility
  o Staff need a private office for conducting interviews
  o Computer with internet access and a printer
  o Room for group meetings (table and chairs)
  o Optional: Stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, scale, and vision chart
• Peer mentors are older adults who may have similar conditions or identified as mentors. A mentor manual is available. There is a “buddy system” to help participants reach their goals.

Training Requirements
• Provider training
  o A nurse, social worker, or community health worker are trained in the program. The training team usually travels to the site. Costs include the licensing fee plus travel to the site (meals, hotel, etc.)
• Certification required?
  o They must complete EnhanceWellness training.
• Qualifications
  o Social worker (MSW preferred)
- Registered nurses licensed by their states
- Community health worker

- Number of staff required
  - Two preferable, but some practices have only one Social Worker or
    Registered Nurse

References


This program overview was prepared by Ellen Schneider, Associate Director for Operations and Communications, UNC Institute on Aging. For additional program information, please visit the Project Enhance website: http://www.projectenhance.org/. Available health outcomes, cost, and savings data presented when known. We extend our thanks to the NC Area Agency on Aging directors for their assistance in designing the format for this document and Project Enhance for reviewing the content.