



MILLION HEARTS ROCHESTER – HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE COLLABORATIVE

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH - UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER MEDICAL CENTER

Million Hearts in Action

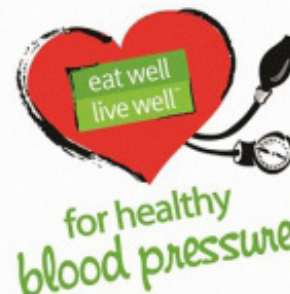
[Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts Goals]



High blood pressure is a leading cause of heart attack and stroke, and can lead to congestive heart failure, kidney diseases, and blindness. In Rochester, New York, and the Finger Lakes region, the area's business community has teamed up with its university medical center, physicians, insurers and nonprofits to tackle the problem. The work began focusing on high blood pressure and has broadened to impact issues such as workplace wellness and the ABCS (Aspirin, Blood pressure, Cholesterol and Smoking Cessation) of cardiovascular risk factors.

[Fast Facts]

- About 70 people and more than 40 organizations came together in 2009 to support and create the High Blood Pressure Collaborative, led by The Finger Lakes Health System Agency and the Rochester Business Alliance.
- According to the health department in Monroe County, which includes Rochester, 32 percent of its adults have high blood pressure, with much higher percentages among African-American and Hispanic residents.



[What We Did]

- The Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency created a high blood pressure registry in partnership with major health systems, Federally Qualified Health Centers and private practices. In June 2014, the registry was expanded to eight Finger Lakes counties and now includes more than 140,000 hypertensive patients
- The Center for Community Health at University of Rochester Medical Center recruited, trained and hired four community health advocates for the Blood Pressure Advocate Program. This video explains how CHAs and clinicians work together to improve health outcomes.
- The advocates, which serve as the link between health care providers and patients, are trained with an eight-session curriculum that covers community health advocacy, self-determination theory, health promotion and disease prevention, hypertension risk factors, communication and outreach. The advocates also have continuing education in hypertension, cardiovascular disease risk factors, core competencies for being a community health workers and prevention.
- In 2014, Wegman's Food Markets, based in Rochester and part of the coalition, ran a promotion for low-dose aspirin as a preventative measure for heart health. It was part of promoting the ABCS in commemorating February as "Heart Month." Customers could buy the aspirin for 99 cents, or get it for free if they talked to a pharmacist to gain more knowledge about whether taking would be right for them. The company sold 5,910 bottles of aspirin, with 13.6 percent of them going for free.
- The ihearteatwelllivewell.org website features an online assessment tool, eating healthy education and worksite wellness tools.

[What We Accomplished]

- Over the course of the project high blood pressure collaborative, control rates in Monroe County have increased from 62.7 to 70.1 percent.
- Providing practice-level blood pressure reports twice a year, allowing clinicians to track progress and identify areas for improvement.
- Engaging 65 partner organizations and more than 200 volunteers.
- Providing consultants to coach practices in proven strategies for managing chronic conditions.
- Launching workplace wellness programs at 20 small/mid-size companies
- Placing 15 blood pressure kiosks in geographically targeted worksites, barbershops, churches and community centers.
- Coaching health ambassadors at churches, barbershops and salons to help members and customers control high blood pressure.
- The community health advocates have helped more than 1,042 patients, and as of December 2014, 409 patients remained active in the program. Of 409 active patients, 71 percent had their blood pressure in control and 85 percent have reported or achieved positive health changes such as losing weight, becoming physically active, taking their medications as prescribed and eating better.
- The Blood Pressure Advocate Program was named by the American Hospital Association as one of five recipients of the 2015 NOVA award, which recognizes leading programs in community health.
- Developed and distributed 500 ABCS wallet cards throughout the community.

“We’ve been able to sustain our efforts when grants come and go because we have such strong public-private partnerships, because of the intricate network of businesses and how they have invested in the community.”

- Shaquana Divers, program manager, Blood Pressure Advocate Program, Center for Community Health - University of Rochester Medical Center Georgia Department of Public Health

[What We Learned]

- Integrating CHWs into clinical teams to help patients address chronic diseases can be challenging work, especially during this time of health-care reform. But it can also be rewarding by helping health systems achieve improved patient outcomes.
- It is important to provide resources to help people address the social determinants of health. Among participants in the Blood Pressure Advocate Program, 50 percent of patients reported they were struggling with transportation, lack of insurance an unhealthy environment or had too many other pressing priorities that prevented them from focusing on controlling blood pressure. After joining and participating in the intervention, 85 percent of patients report positive changes, including reductions in weight, increased physical activity and better nutrition.
- It is important to provide education. Among participants surveyed, the largest percentage said lack of understanding about how to improve blood pressure was their biggest barrier.
- Interventions should integrate opportunities for social connections.

[What We Are Doing now]

Although strides were gained in reducing the community’s overall blood pressure rate, the hypertension gap widened among certain populations including African Americans, Hispanics and individuals from low socioeconomic backgrounds. To respond to this the High Blood Pressure collaborative is targeting health disparities by expanding community outreach in churches, beauty salons and barbershops, and worksites that employ vulnerable populations. Current efforts are in the Rochester area, which is in Monroe County, but other nearby counties also have reached out for information.

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[https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/
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