**Healthful Eating, Exercise, Engagement And Lifestyle Through Hospitality**

**(HE3ALTH)**

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PHYT 824 Topics in Health and Wellness Promotion

Unit 4 Assignment

Early Program Development

**Theory**

The Social Ecological Model (SEM) reciprocally influences health behaviors among the individual, interpersonal, community, and population levels. HE3ALTH is a non-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that applies the SEM to target hotel cleaners’ health behavior determinants at the individual and interpersonal levels, in order to implement evidence-based interventions that effectively prevent, mitigate, and remedy chronic conditions to which they are at risk.

**Individual Determinants**

A multitude of individual factors contribute to cleaners’ subjection to neuro-musculoskeletal injury, cardiovascular disease, and psychological stress. Lack of fitness and training predisposes cleaners to difficulty with physically demanding and repetitive motions, inadvertently leading to compensatory positions or postures that expedite other overuse injuries from lifting and reaching tasks.1 Occupational hazards such as steps and wet floors increase their risk of sprains and fractures from falls.1

Poverty, undereducation, and productivity demands drive poor diet choices based on low cost and high convenience, leading to obesity-related comorbidities such as osteoarthritis, degenerative disc disease, and metabolic dysfunction.2 Contributing to initial injury predisposition, smoking impairs healing of injured tissues, contributes to cardiopulmonary disease and cancer, and diverts income that could be otherwise invested in health (i.e. healthy food, gym membership, medical insurance or co-pay).2 High respiratory rates due to excess weight and poor cardiovascular function increase inhalation of fumes from chemical cleaning products, exacerbated by inadequate ventilation or improper application attributed to lack of training or demands of productivity.1

Undernourished overeating also impairs psychoneuroimmunologic resilience against toxicity from both physical and emotional stressors, leading to conditions from chronic pain to depression.3 This resilience is likewise impaired by shift work and alcohol consumption that disrupt sleep cycles and negatively affect mood and overall wellbeing.2,3

**Interpersonal Determinants**

 Multiple interpersonal factors contribute to cleaners’ psychological and physical health. Foremost, cleaners who are single parents experience increased physical and emotional labor burdens both at work and at home. At work, rapid turnover makes it difficult to establish supportive relationships, and many cleaners operate in isolation without physical and emotional support, increasing their risk of injury and illness.4 At home, lack of social support amidst the demands of childcare impedes upon time to exercise, socialize, sleep, and prepare healthy meals. Non-English speaking cleaners face additional barriers to forming social bonds and accessing support networks.

**Interventions**

The following represent applicable interventions to effectively prevent, mitigate, and remedy the aforementioned conditions to which cleaners are at risk. Emphasis on promoting socialization and relationship building is key to ensuring interventions influence both individual and interpersonal health behavior determinants synergistically.

Ergonomics: Education and training on healthy posture and body mechanics during occupational activities significantly improves self-reported pain and/or discomfort for up to three months. Education includes basic anatomy and physiology to form individual understanding of ergonomic principles. Training includes practice of lifting techniques and exercise to oppose poor posture. Additionally, training dispersed over three consecutive days in one-hour increments maximizes improvement sustainment.5

Exercise and Physical Activity: Increasing daily steps and stair climbing at work effectively enhances exercise tolerance, cardiovascular fitness, joint mobility, sleep quality, and body mass composition, as well as decreases blood pressure and low density lipoprotein (LDL) concentration.6,7 Progression involves increasing daily steps by 500 steps each week, until a 10,000 step goal is attained.7 Instruction on strategies to increase steps (i.e. parking further from door), increase social support (i.e. walk with co-workers during break), and overcome barriers (i.e. take children on walk after work if childcare is unavailable) increases carryover from workday physical activity to non-workday physical activity and results in maximized physical activity improvements.7

Nutrition: The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) protocol effectively reduces body mass index (BMI) for up to two years in cleaners, with greatest success ensured by weekly 30-minute health check-ins. Initial education and weekly check-ins also provide opportunities for social collaboration toward improved health behaviors, and extra weekly weight management groups especially benefit obese cleaners in attaining goal BMI.8

Sleep: Education and coaching on sleep hygiene improve the quantity (7-9 hours) of quality sleep necessary for optimal health, including tissue healing, pain modulation, and cardiovascular function. The pillars of sleep hygiene are: (1) going to bed and waking up at the same time every day; (2) reserving the bed for only sleep and sexual activity; (3) leaving the bed if unable to fall asleep in 15 minutes; (4) avoiding stimulants and stimulating activities before sleep; and (5) developing a relaxing bedtime routine such as taking a warm bath, reading a paper book, stretching, and/or meditating. These latter techniques may be capitalized on during waking hours to initiate parasympathetic response, reduce cortisol levels, limit oxidative stress, and lower blood pressure as well.9

Additional evidence-based interventions to influence cleaners’ health behaviors at the individual and interpersonal levels include the following. Smoking cessation interventions must be available to the 32% of cleaners who use tobacco, and this intervention provides another opportunity for social comradery in the effort of health behavior change.1 Similarly, occupational safety education surrounding falls prevention and cleaning product usage intervenes against orthopedic and respiratory injury, respectively.1 Finally, childcare services or co-op groups provide time for cleaners to invest in healthy behaviors, relieving both physical and psycho-emotional stress.10

**Outcomes**

The following represent applicable outcome measures to ensure the efficacy of aforementioned interventions in preventing, mitigating, and remedying cleaners’ injuries and diseases at the individual and interpersonal levels.

Body Mass Index: BMI is an unsophisticated but predictive measure of the impacts from both exercise and nutrition interventions on obesity-related comorbidity and mortality. Cleaners’ risk of obesity-related comorbidities decreases when BMI falls below 40 kilograms per meter squared (kg/m2), then again below 30kg/m2, and again below 25kg/m2.11,12 BMI is increasingly predictive when corroborated with minimal waist circumference (MWC),12 with which risk of cardiovascular disease and other obesity-related comorbidities continuously and directly decrease.11,12 This is because, even if BMI is normal, fat stored around the abdomen increases disease risk more than fat stored around the hips and thighs.12,13,18

Pain: Self-reported pain intensity on a 0-10 point visual analog scale (VAS) is again an unsophisticated but predictive measure of an intervention’s impact on improving health and decreasing disability. For some conditions, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, pain intensity is linearly correlated to disability. For others, such as back pain, scores 1-4, 5-6, and 7-10 are nonlinearly correlated to increasing disability levels, respectively. For back pain, clinically meaningful improvement is represented by a one-point reduction from a score of 1-4 or a two points reduction from a score of 5-10.14

Daily Physical Activity: This can be measured in the number of steps or equivalent units a cleaner takes per day, through a pedometer or smart phone application. Six thousand steps represent the minimum amount of daily activity required to reduce functional limitations from osteoarthritis,15 with 10,000 steps the minimum amount of daily activity required to reduce overall comorbidity and mortality.16

Blood Pressure and Heartrate: Correlated to the impacts of the DASH diet and exercise on cardiovascular fitness, as well as impacts of relaxation techniques and social support on stress levels, blood pressure (BP) and heartrate (HR) are vital signs of health and wellbeing. Systolic BP of 90-114mmHg and diastolic BP of 60-74mmHg indicate the lowest incidence of cardiovascular disease, with increased BP correlated to increased cardiovascular risk.17 Age-predicted HR maximum (HRmax) guides exercise, and HRmax and resting HR measure cardiovascular capacity. For participants on betablocker medication, rate of perceived exertion (RPE) during varying gait speeds may be used instead.

**Goals**

1. Ninety percent of participants achieve a 5-point BMI reduction (or healthy BMI <25) or a 3-inch MWC (or healthy MWC <35in) in three months, to reduce their risk of cardiovascular and obesity-related disease.11-13,18
2. Ninety percent of participants achieve a 2-point reduction in pain (or no pain) on the 0-10 VAS with zero incidence of newly onset overuse injuries in three months, to improve occupational health, safety, and decrease disability.5,14
3. All participants achieve daily activity levels equivalent to at least 10,000 steps in three months, to reduce osteoarthritis and overall comorbidity and mortality.15,16
4. Ninety percent of participants demonstrate the ability to achieve a healthy resting BP of 120/80mmHg in three months, to optimally reduce their risk of twelve cardiovascular and hypertensive-related diseases.17

**Methods**

Who

HE3ALTH participants are recruited amongst all hotel staff, with an emphasis on targeting cleaning and custodial staff, who have been identified as a vulnerable population. However, all staff are welcome to participate so as not to further marginalize cleaning and custodial staff. All recruitment efforts and interventional events are coordinated with hotel management around shift times, to promote feasibility and sustainability of participation. Childcare is provided at all events to further support participation.10

Where

The majority of HE3ALTH events are held at the hotel, in available event rooms and recreational areas for ease of accessibility. However, at least one event is held off-site each month, as research suggests that hosting all events at the work-site may be negatively perceived by participants as unpaid labor.8 Additionally, as the program grows to include multiple sites, event locations will be rotated and transportation will be provided to ensure equal accessibility for all participants.

When

HE3ALTH programming occurs in three-month cycles, with each iteration beginning on the first Tuesday of January, April, July, and October each year. See below for details.

What:

All HE3ALTH interventions target identified individual and interpersonal health behavior determinants according to the SEM framework as previously outlined. In addition to weekly specialty classes each Tuesday, routine interventional events include 45-minute dance aerobics sessions on Monday afternoons, 45-minute strength training sessions on Thursday afternoons with a physical therapist available afterward for one-on-one pro-bono consultation, and 45-minute yoga sessions on Friday afternoons with a social and buffet of fruit and vegetables provided afterward. Tuesday specialty events are 90-minutes and cover core interventions, as per the below schedule. To complete the program and have their data included in the program’s outcome assessment, participants must attend weeks 2-4 and week 12 specialty interventions and at least four of the other specialty interventions, for a total of nine out of 12 core specialty events.

Week 1: During this first class, participants receive a mandatory introductory class that reviews the program’s benefits and expectations, available resources, and goal setting, as a means to empower and motivate sustained participation. Participants receive welcome packets, including an overview of the program, the schedule of events, and materials covered in each of the following classes. Participants’ baseline height, weight, BMI, MWC, resting BP, and age-predicted HRmax, are measured and provided to them at the end of the class, for them to record in their packet. The packet also includes space to record participants self-reported pain baseline, as well as document personal goals and log self-recorded nutritional intake, daily activity, HRmax, sleep hours, stress levels, resting BP. All participants receive and are instructed in the use of their personal pedometer. Light refreshments meeting the DASH diet parameters are provided.

 Week 2: On the second Tuesday, HE3ALTH volunteers instruct participants on the fundamentals of nutrition, including the importance of adequate water intake, and the DASH diet, including its parameters and documented benefits, especially in reducing BP as an indicator of cardiovascular health. Additional strategies for grocery shopping and meal preparation are presented. Subsequently, an overview of cardiovascular disease is provided to segue the combined power of nutrition and exercise, with additional resources for other interventions such as smoking cessation programs. The final part of the class provides a general overview of workplace safety (i.e. falls and fumes) and the importance of proper posture and biomechanics for injury prevention, followed by demonstration and group practice. Light refreshments meeting the DASH diet parameters are provided.

 Week 3: Beginning on the third Tuesday, each class begins with a 30 minute “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, focused on the previous week’s instruction but open to any issues.8 During this segment, the lead volunteer facilitates a *group* discussion in which fellow participants problem-solve and empower one another with suggested tips or tricks for overcoming identified barriers. During the remainder of this class, volunteers guide participants in rotating through various stations in which volunteers provide one-on-one individualized assessments and re-education interventions of participants’ posture and biomechanics during functional and occupational activities such as squatting and lifting. Assessments and individual ergonomic interventions are performed according the Selective Functional Movement Assessment.19

 Week 4: On the fourth Tuesday, following “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, volunteers instruct participants on strategies to increase their physical activity in the equivalent of daily steps, such as parking far from an entrance or taking the stairs instead of the elevator.6,7 All participants receive the general prescription of increasing their daily steps by 1,000 each week, until they achieve a sustained daily total of 10,000 steps.7 For participants who experience pain while walking, strategies such as stretching tight soft tissues or taking shorter strides are offered, as well as alternative activities such as biking in hotel gym or aquatics in hotel pool, with explanation of how they activities lubricate, off-weight, and prevent arthritis of joints. Participants with pain are also be encouraged to schedule a pro-bono consultation on Thursdays or seek immediate consultation after class. Subsequently, participants review the 5-minute “What is Chronic Pain” video, to augment their understanding of how to successfully progress exercise to manage – not exacerbate – pain.20 After the video, participants are polled to identify potential “HE3ALTH Leaders” within each shift, to coordinate walking groups before work and/or during common break times. Likewise, participants are encouraged to identify an “Accountability Buddy” at work as well as outside work, with an emphasis on building their support network as they prepare to make time for structured exercise. The final part of the class consists of demonstration and practice of a dynamic warm up routine and cool down stretches.

 Week 5: Following “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, the fifth class begins with a review of HRmax and how to take one’s own HR, a dynamic warm up, and demonstration and group practice of various upper body, lower body, and core exercises that can easily be performed at home. Circulating volunteers coach participants in proper form and proper HR measurement. Volunteers then instruct patients on how to progress exercises by increasing weight, repetitions, and sets and/or decreasing rest periods. Participants are then provided time to choose amongst the practiced exercises, to design a home exercise program (HEP) that works toward improving their weaknesses and fits their comfort level (physically and timewise). Again, volunteers circulate to consult and provide feedback on HEPs. Light refreshments meeting the DASH diet parameters are provided.

 Week 6: Following “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, the sixth class consists of instruction on why stress is adaptive (i.e. fight or flight), when stress becomes maladaptive, and mindfulness and breathing techniques to combat maladaptive stress. Instructed mindfulness techniques, also known as mobile meditation, include techniques that acknowledge thoughts without pursuing them and awareness of sensations such as the breath. Instructed breathing techniques include deep relaxation breathing and right nostril breathing, to stimulate parasympathetic response and quickly reduce HR and BP. Participants are then organized into groups and led in a series of aerobic exercises to raise their HR and BP, with participants of each group taking turns to temporarily exit exercise and practice breathing techniques with HR and BP biofeedback (using a vitals machine or manual measurements). The final part of the class consists of a short formal meditation, with the recommendation that participants adopt this for stress relief and relaxation throughout the day or prior to sleep.

 Week 7: Following “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, the seventh class focuses on the importance of sleep and techniques to enhance sleep through sleep hygiene. Subsequently, participants create their individualized sleep hygiene plan. The final part of the class consists of a restorative yoga session and quiet meditation.

 Week 8: Following “Check In and Overcome Barriers”, the eighth class focuses on assessing progress toward personal goals, reestablishing commitment, reestablishing support, renegotiating obstacles, and accessing additional resources as needed.

 Week 9: This class is a social event, beginning with a buffet of light refreshments meeting the DASH diet parameters. Following dinner, volunteers facilitate a “Check In and Overcome Barriers” discussion emphasizing dietary behaviors.

 Week 10: This class includes instruction and practice of circuit training, preceded by a “Check In and Overcome Barriers” discussion emphasizing ergonomics and exercise.

 Week 11: This class includes a specialty yoga and meditation session, preceded by a “Check In and Overcome Barriers” discussion and emphasizing stress and sleep.

 Week 12: This final session begins with reassessment of participants weight, BMI, MWC, resting BP, and self-reported pain. Three-month incidence of injury and pedometer data are also collected (from logs or directly from device). Subsequently, participants receive completion certificates and celebrate over a buffet dinner prepared in accordance with DASH diet parameters. Participants are polled to identify potential shift HE3ALTH Leaders and Mentors. All participants are invited to continue attending both routine and core specialty program events. Afterward, participants are also invited to join in a sensing session, in which they provide program leaders with suggested improvements. Hotel managers are consulted for suggestions each quarter as well.

How (Resourcing)

All HE3ALTH events are facilitated by trained and qualified volunteers, who are resourced from among community members, particularly healthcare workers and Spanish speakers, and program graduates serving as HE3ALTH Leaders or Mentors.

Again, all events are located in available spaces within the hotel unless otherwise noted, with at least one event per month which located at a pre-determined off-site location. Off-site venues and program equipment are resourced through grants, donations, sponsorships, and community partnerships. Local gymnasiums, yoga studios, restaurants, and grocery stores are targeted for venue and product donations.

Funding is specifically solicited from participating hospitality companies, with the incentive that the program increases employee health, morale, and productivity and decreases costly absenteeism of their staff,4 as well as leverage consumer consciousness within their own marketing efforts. Other potential sponsors include the Pat Tillman Foundation, Team Rubicon, Spirit of America and other national and local health-promoting agencies. Thus, this program requires minimal resources, but routinely required equipment in order of priority includes folders and paper for program packets and marketing materials, pedometers, stethoscope and blood pressure cuff set (or vital sign machine), resistance bands, yoga mats, weights, aerobic steps, weekly fruit and vegetable supplies, yoga blocks, t-shirts, heart rate monitor wrist watches.

**Evaluation**

 Comparison of baseline measurements from week 1 and final measurements from week 12 are recorded from all participants but only analyzed for participants meeting aforementioned attendance requirements. These measures include height, weight, BMI, MWC, resting BP, self-reported pain, and daily steps recorded from assessors’ records, participants logs, and/or pedometers as applicable. Copies of these records are maintained until data is entered into program’s Excel database. Using data, individual differences and collective mean differences between baseline and final measurements are calculated for each outcome. Based on the program’s timeline, measurements are recorded and collectively re-analyzed every three months, with both cohort and cumulative data maintained for program records.

 Specifically, a scale and measuring tape are utilized to measure weight and height, and standardized BMI is calculated as kilograms per meter squared. The percentage of participants achieving a 5-point BMI reduction (or healthy BMI) is calculated, as well as average BMI change. Likewise, with the 0-10 VAS utilized to measure pain, the percentage of participants achieving a 2-point pain reduction (or no pain) is calculated, as well as average change in pain. Using pedometer data, the percentage of participants achieving an equivalent total of 10,000 steps and the average change in daily activity – represented by step equivalents – is calculated. Finally, using week 1 and week 12 BP data collected manually or via a vitals machine, the percentage of participants achieving a resting BP of 120/80mmHg and the average change in systolic and diastolic blood pressure is calculated.

The same measurements are again recorded and analyzed for HE3ALTH Leaders and Mentors continuing participation through an additional iteration, and this data is included in a separate analysis to assess the sustainability of program results.

While the above outcome measures quantitatively evaluate the program’s effectiveness, the percentage of participants who complete the program attendance requirements is also telling. The final sensing session at week 12 provides essential qualitative evaluative insights into the program’s effectiveness in targeting and tailoring interventions to hotel cleaners and other hospitality staff. This qualitative evaluation can be used to shape continued program improvements, spanning from peripheral, linguistic, constituent, sociocultural, and evidential components of the program.21 For instance, program materials and volunteers may benefit from being more representative of participants, such as through translation of materials into Spanish or volunteers and mentors who are more fluent in Spanish or more familiar with participants’ occupational requirements and extra-occupational stressors.21

Likewise, stakeholders’ evaluative input is pivotal to ensuring continued program funding, and a quarterly meeting is held to engage stakeholders after the culmination of each iteration. Stakeholders include representatives among participants, volunteers, hotel management, donors, sponsors, and other community partners. During this meeting, the program statement of need, interventions, goals, progress toward goals, and relevant newly emerged evidence is reviewed. Stakeholders are invited to make inquiries and suggestions into program methods, results, and potential improvements. Each quarter, a new quality initiative is identified by the group, for investigation throughout the following iteration (i.e. cost analysis, time management, or attrition assessment). Meeting minutes are maintained as continuity of lessons learned.22

**Conclusion**

Hotel cleaners represent a population whose health is severely disadvantaged at individual and interpersonal levels of the SEM, compared to the majority of society, including occupants who can afford nightly hotel rates and stockholders who benefit from hotel profits, generated in part by cleaner’s high productivity at low wages. Yet, through this HE3ALTH’s band of volunteers, interventions to mitigate health risks and maximize healthy behaviors can be feasibly and economically integrated into the hotel work environment, reducing overall absentee and healthcare costs required by the employer.4 Thus, as is a non-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, this program provides donors with a large humanitarian return on investment, in addition to a tax deduction.

Most importantly, HE3ALTH has monumental potential to grow in a variety of directions that can further propel community and population health agendas. Such growth potential includes providing structured pediatric health SEM modeled interventions to participants’ children concurrent with or in addition to childcare, extending educational and exercise classes to promote health and wellness among hotel occupants and the wider community, and expanding the program framework to other industries, from private auto shops to corporate retailers and beyond.

Join us in uniting industry and community to promote HE3ALTH from work to home.

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