Mayors Wellness Campaign
Put your community in motion.

Physical Health & Nutrition

Walk and Talk on Health

GET MOVING & LEARNING

- Incorporating Walk and Talk on Health programming gives your residents an opportunity to meet and talk with local health care providers while being physically active.
- Walking is low-risk, and can help maintain weight, strengthen bones and muscles, and prevent heart disease and type-2 diabetes.
- Walk and Talk on Health not only encourages participants to exercise and get involved in their community, but also serves as a health education session where participants can have conversations with a local health care provider on a variety of health topics.

ACTION STEPS

Get Connected

- Contact local health care providers (such as a physician, nurse, social worker, physical therapist, etc.) to lead a walk.
- Check the MWC newsletter for information on volunteer health care providers available to your community.
- Build relationships with local facilities to host your walks (such as local parks or malls).
- Work with participating health care providers to decide on Walk and Talk on Health discussion topics and to promote the walks.
- Partner with local organizations to assist in advertisement or sponsorship (i.e., ask a local restaurant to sponsor water bottles).

Pick a Day and Time

- What will the age and ability range of your audience be? Decide whether your event will be targeted towards adults, older adults, children, or all.
- Determine when to walk. Think about a time and day that would attract the most residents. Try to avoid dates near holidays.
- Ask questions like: Do we want to host a monthly walk, seasonal walk, or weekly with a different theme for 6 weeks? What will the weather be like?

FOLLOW THEIR LEAD!

In 2019, Highland Park hosted its first Walk and Talk on Health with a local cardiologist to promote local opportunities available for residents to get and stay fit. Participants walked through Main Street Highland Park and were able to discuss heart health and health tips with a local cardiologist. This event was part of the MWC PLUS initiative, generously supported by the Aetna Foundation.

For more information, contact the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute's Mayors Wellness Campaign at 609-452-5980 or info@njhcqi.org

- Clear your schedule and stay committed. Participation grows with each event as participating residents start to invite their family and friends.

Map Your Walk

- Where will you have your walk? Walks can be led in a local park or walking trail, the mall, or school track. Aim for routes that are in safe walking areas.
- Consider modifying the walking route for residents of various ability levels (i.e., those unable to walk long distances or go up hills). Choose a location where participants can rest if needed or join for a portion of the walk.
- Recruit volunteers to encourage and oversee participants through their walk.

Get the Word Out

- Post flyers around town (i.e., in town hall, the library, local shops, grocery store) and at the participating health care provider's office. Send out emails about the event and promote the event on social media.
- Reach out to local faith-based organizations, schools, and community and senior centers to help promote the event.
- Challenge residents to attend with a friend or neighbor.
- Host signups at community and school meetings. Use online forms to reach residents who aren't as active in the community.
- Communicate what will happen in the event of inclement weather. Will the event be cancelled, or will there be an alternate location or rain date?
- Make it clear whether the event will be child- and pet-friendly.

Evaluate Your Impact

- Evaluation is an important process that allows your community to identify areas of improvement and define the impact of your programming.
- Include evaluation methods in your action plan. Record quantitative data such as attendance or changes in knowledge to define impact.
- Provide a survey before the event to obtain baseline data. Provide a post-event survey to see the impact of your program. Use these results to evaluate best practices and lessons learned to improve future programming.

MORE RESOURCES

- EverybodyWalk!
- Benefits of Group Walking
- American Heart Association Walking Resources
- Walking: A Step in the Right Direction

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