

Enhancing the Wellness of Offenders in a Correctional Substance Abuse Program: A Community Based Approach

Philip Curd, MD, MPH, University of Kentucky (Philip.curd@uky.edu)
Sandra Winter, MHA, University of Kentucky (sjwint2@email.uky.edu)

OUTLINE

The Need for Correctional Wellness Programs

The Offender – high health risk behaviors, less access to health, increased prevalence of disease and illness, aging

The State – responsibility to efficiently utilize state resources, window of opportunity

Evidence that Worksite Wellness Programs Work

Cost effective, improve morale, improve health

Lessons from the Worksite Wellness Approach

Leadership support, appoint a Wellness Committee, evidence-based interventions, strategic plan, Health Risk Assessment, review and revise plan, collect data

Typical Wellness Topics

Nutrition, exercise, stress management, tobacco use, screenings, work site injuries, dental care, alcohol and drug use, STDs etc

Examples of Wellness Program Activities

Biologic testing, individualized recommendations on basis of HRA response, workshops, incentives, exercise facilities, healthy food choices on site, newsletter

Adapting Worksite Wellness to Corrections

Little adjustment needed, material incentives problematic, security concerns, inmate involvement not traditional, custom specific wording of some documents required

KyDOC Wellness Program

Behavioral substance abuse program, 200 residents, all male, average age = 35, 35% African American, 65% white, non medical, minimum security, prisoners and parolees, structured program, started August 2005

Important Considerations

Community based participative approach

Precede-Proceed model

PRECEDE-PROCEED Process

Assess – social context, epidemiologic data, audit behavior & environment, identify predisposing, reinforcing & enabling factors, administrative & policy context

Implement

Evaluate

Examples of Wellness Works – Process

Academic partner proposed a wellness emphasis, senior Dept of Correction administrators agreed, appointed a wellness committee which developed a plan that was approved by leadership, allocated resources, HRA developed specifically for offenders, interventions implemented, data collected, wellness elder & resident staff aide appointed

Examples of Wellness Works – Projects

HRA's administered, classes addressing modifiable risk factors, garden, nutrition workshop, walking track, visiting speakers, peer-peer moderated smoking cessation forums, enhanced library materials, in-house newsletter by residents

Evaluating a Wellness Program

Self administered questionnaires – event evaluations, exit evaluations, key informant survey, health risk assessment

Medical records

Logs and administrative and program documents – process logs, participation rosters, meeting notes, wellness plan, environmental and curriculum audit, cost data, canteen sales

Ultimate Outcomes

Long term self-reports (HRAs)

Physiologic measures – BP, blood lipids, weight, abdominal girth

Disease Outcomes

Data Not Yet Analyzed

Participation rates, physiologic measures, canteen sales

Is Wellness Works Working?

Program has been well-received by staff and residents

Changes to community culture, e.g. the appointment of a wellness elder & aide

Residents have suggested program improvements, e.g. tracking health behaviors

Program is supported by DOC

Activities are well-attended

Program is expanding

No striking changes in lifestyle reported

Long term effects as yet unknown

Essential Elements of a Successful Correctional Wellness Program

Planning and preparation – needs assessment, resource allocation, evidence based interventions, strategic plan, measurable objectives, holistic approach, collect performance data, cost-effective and efficient, plan for sustainability

People – leadership support, a champion, committed staff, high levels of participation, target high risk offender, effective communication strategy

Community-Based Participation – wellness committee representative of community, activities monitored by Evaluation Advisory Panel, coordination of program by Elder

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Written comments from men who are entering the wellness program:

- *I think this program can do a lot of good for us guys down here and if possible in other places as well.*
- *I think this program would be very beneficial to our overall health. And to our health on a mental level relating to our recovery.*
- *I think the wellness program would be a great thing for the people of this TC community. Not only are we getting help for addiction and our minds but we will be able to learn about our health and how to make sure we are maintaining good healthy routines. I feel it will be a great thing.*
- *Good idea. It will probably help a lot of people start to take better care of themselves.*
- *I really think this event will help me in some or all areas of my health problems.*
- *Applying myself to this program I strongly feel my health levels will increase for the better.*

PRECEDE-PROCEED Steps	Wellness Works Activities
Step 1. Social Assessment	Discussions between administrators, residents and academics on relevance of a wellness emphasis to the substance abuse treatment program. Arrangement for initial funding. Wellness Committee strategic planning
Step 2. Epidemiological Assessment	Along with qualitative data on prevalent risk factors in the RTC community, the Wellness Committee considers quantitative state-wide risk factor data and analysis of baseline HRA data.
Step 3. Behavioral and Environmental Assessment	Baseline HRA data. Discussions with warden. Formal assessment of policies and physical environment, including wellness content in existing substance abuse treatment curriculum.
Step 4. Educational and Ecological Assessment	Wellness Committee's strategic plan identifies and allows for <i>predisposing, reinforcing, and enabling</i> factors in the RTC population and environment. Empirical evidence and theoretical basis for planned activities supplied by academic partners.
Step 5. Administrative and Policy Assessment	Administrative agreement that Wellness Works will be an integral part of the substance abuse program. Nurse-educator position approved. On-going involvement of upper-level administrators.
Step 6. Implementation	Increase in class content that addresses high-risk behavior. Posters, etc. Activation of participatory Evaluation Advisory Panel (EAP).
Step 7. Process Evaluation	EAP involved. Periodic reports to DOC Medical Director. Minutes of Committee meetings.
Step 8. Impact Evaluation	EAP involved. Process logs. Evaluation questionnaires for staff and residents. Follow-up HRAs.
Step 9. Outcome Evaluation	EAP involved. Pending

Written comments of men who have completed the wellness program:

- *I'm striving to be healthier one day at a time.*
- *I'm gonna try-it's all about the action I put into my wellness. At least I have the knowledge.*
- *Thank you for your time. I got a lot out of it.*
- *Many of us are wanting to change their lives for the better. Today's session has been very informative and well presented.*
- *I really think this event will help me in some or all areas of my health problems.*

Contact Information: Philip Curd, MD, MSPH
Assistant Professor
University of Kentucky College of Public Health
Lexington, KY
859 257-5678 x82100