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Allina Health Neighborhood Health Connection™

2014 Healthy Activity Grant Follow-up Survey Evaluation Summary

Overview

The Allina Health Neighborhood Health Connection (NHC) Healthy Activity Grants were created to help individuals build social connections and participate in activities that encourage physical activity and/or healthy eating. The evaluation results gathered to date show a number of promising project outcomes. A majority of participants reported positive changes in social connections, physical activity, and healthy eating at the end of the 2014 NHC funding period.

Key outcomes six months after the NHC grant period ended

Positive changes in social connections, physical activity, and healthy eating continued six months after the NHC grant period ended for a majority of follow-up survey respondents. Often, these changes were more likely among respondents who continued to participate in an activity after the NHC grant period ended. In addition, a majority of grantees continued their activity after the NHC funding ended.

Evaluation methods

NHC grantees received funding to implement their social connectedness activity during an 8-month period (July 2014-February 2015). At the end of each grantee's funding period, an initial survey was administered to grantees and participants. Six months later, follow-up surveys were sent to participants and grantees who completed the initial survey. The follow-up survey was sent to 621 participants and completed by 380, a response rate of 61 percent. Participants from 43 NHC-funded activities responded to the survey. Participants who responded to the survey tended to be white women, age 40 and older, who are in good health. Caution should be used when interpreting the follow-up participant survey results, as they may not represent the thoughts of all participants. The follow-up grantee survey was sent to 53 grantees and completed by 48, a response rate of 91 percent.

Continued participation in an activity

A majority of grantees (79%) who responded to the survey reported that they continued to offer their activity after the NHC grant period ended. This was somewhat surprising, as the program did not place a large emphasis on long-term sustainability. Most grantees decided to continue their activity because participants wanted it to continue (79%), and it had a positive impact on participants' health (76%).

A majority of participants (60%) who responded to the survey reported that they continued to take part in the NHC activity that they were involved with six months ago. The most common reason individuals stopped participating was because the activity was no longer offered.

Success building social connections

Many participants continued to maintain new social connections after the NHC funding ended. Sixty-five percent indicated that they met new people through the NHC activity. Of these participants, most (81%) reported that they still talk to or meet with at least one of the new people who they met. Participants who continued taking part in an activity were significantly more likely to report feeling more connected to the community (61%), compared to those who did not continue to participate (48%).¹

Over half of participants (56%) reported that they feel more connected to their community since taking part in the NHC activity six months ago. Almost half of participants (46%) reported an increase in their connection at the end of the NHC funding and at the six month follow-up (Figure 1).

1. Participants' change in their connection to the community (N=369)

End of NHC funding	Six month follow-up	Percentage
↑	↑	46%
—	—	28%
↑	—	15%
—	↑	11%

↑ = connection increased, — = no change in connection

Note: One participant reported being less connected six months later.

Success improving health behaviors

Over half of participants (53%) reported being more physically active since taking part in the NHC activity six months ago. Over one-third of participants (37%) reported doing more physical activity at the end of the NHC funding and at the six month follow-up (Figure 2).

2. Participants' change in their physical activity (N=323)

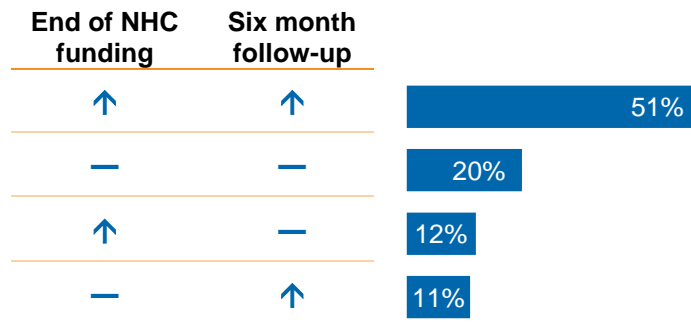
End of NHC funding	Six month follow-up	Percentage
↑	↑	37%
—	—	23%
↑	—	20%
—	↑	17%

↑ = physical activity increased, — = no change in physical activity

Note: About three percent of participants reported being less physically active during the end of funding or six months later.

Sixty-four percent of participants reported eating healthy meals and snacks more often since taking part in the NHC activity six months ago. Over half of participants (51%) reported eating healthier foods at the end of the NHC funding and at the six month follow-up (Figure 3).

3. Participants' change in their healthy eating behavior (N=180)



↑ = healthy eating increased, — = no change in healthy eating

Note: Six percent of participants reported a decrease in healthy eating at the end of funding, but an increase in healthy eating at the six month follow-up.

Participants who continued taking part in a social connectedness activity were more likely to report improved health behaviors. Those who continued to take part in an activity were significantly more likely to report improvements in healthy eating (69%), compared to those who did not continue to participate (54%). Improvements in physical activity were also more common among individuals who continued to participate (58%) compared to those who did not (47%); however, these changes are not statistically significant.¹

¹ Significance tests were conducted using a chi-squared test. Differences are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

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For more information

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