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# Allina Health Neighborhood Health Connection™

## *2016 Evaluation Summary*

The Allina Health Neighborhood Health Connection (NHC) grants were created to help individuals build social connections and participate in activities that encourage physical activity and healthy eating. Results from the evaluation suggest positive changes in social connections, physical activity, and healthy eating occurred for a majority of participants. In addition, participants who took part in a higher number of activities were more likely to report positive changes.

### *Evaluation methods*

At the end of the grant-funded activities, surveys were administered to participants. (Four of the 58 grantees did not administer the survey.) In total, the survey was completed by 648 of the approximately 1,405 eligible participants (i.e., adults age 18 or older who participated in an activity at least twice), a response rate of 46 percent. As in previous grant cycles, the participants who responded to the 2016 survey were primarily white (81%), female (77%), and rated their health as good or better (89%). The percentage of participants of color who responded to the 2016 survey (20%) was in the range of previous grant cycles (12-29%). Frequency of participation in the NHC activities was categorized as high (participants attended 6 or more activity sessions), moderate (4-5 sessions), or low (2-3 sessions).

### *Limitations*

Caution should be used when interpreting the results as they may not represent the thoughts of all participants who were eligible for the survey. In addition the results of the significance testing should also be interpreted with caution as slightly less than half of the participants completed the survey. Also, the findings in this report focus on short-term changes that may not result in long-term behavior change. Long-term outcomes will be explored through the follow-up survey administered to participants six months after the end of the NHC funding period.

### *Reach of the NHC Healthy Activity Grants*

**In 2016, 54 NHC-funded grantees reached 2,557 participants.** Over half of grantees used the NHC funding to work with an existing community group (59%), rather than create a new group (41%) to host their activities. In addition, 64 percent of grantees identified their activity as an **open cohort** in which the group of participants remained mostly the same, but new people could join at any point. Twenty-five percent identified their activity as an **open group** in which some participants attended multiple activities, but the overall group of participants differed at each event. Eleven percent reported that their activity was a **closed cohort** in which an identified group of participants took part in a series of activities and new people typically did not join.

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## Success building social connections

**The survey findings suggest positive changes in social connections occurred for a majority of participants.** A majority of participants reported that as a result of participating in a NHC activity they strengthened their current (88%) and built new connections (89%). Most were very (52%) or somewhat (32%) confident they would continue to maintain their new relationships after the NHC activity ended.

Participants who took part at a high frequency were significantly more likely to indicate (68%) they were very confident they would stay in touch with at least one new connection, compared to those who participated at a moderate or low frequency (44% and 48%, respectively; Figure 1).\*

## Success improving health behaviors

Results suggest participants made changes in their physical activity and healthy eating behavior as a result of the NHC activities. Over six in ten participants reported eating healthier meals and snacks (62%) and being more physically active (61%) compared to six months ago. Over half indicated they considered it very likely that they will eat healthier (56%) and be more physical active (51%) in the future

Participants who took part at a high frequency were significantly more likely to report (66%) they were more physically active than six months ago, in contrast to those who participated at a moderate or low frequency (51% and 54%, respectively; Figure 2).\*

Participants who took part at a high frequency were also more likely to report (68%) eating healthier, in contrast to those who took part at a moderate or low frequency (51% and 59%, respectively). Differences between high frequency and moderate frequency participants were statistically significant.\*

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

FIGURE 1: PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE VERY CONFIDENT THEY'LL STAY IN TOUCH WITH A NEW CONNECTION, BY FREQUENCY OF INVOLVEMENT

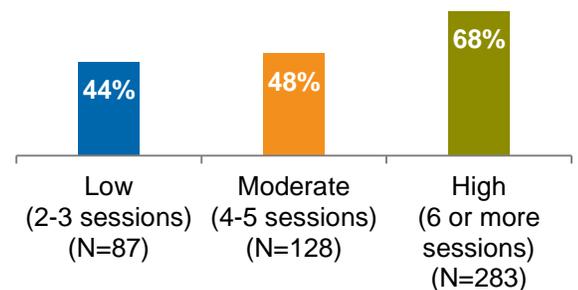
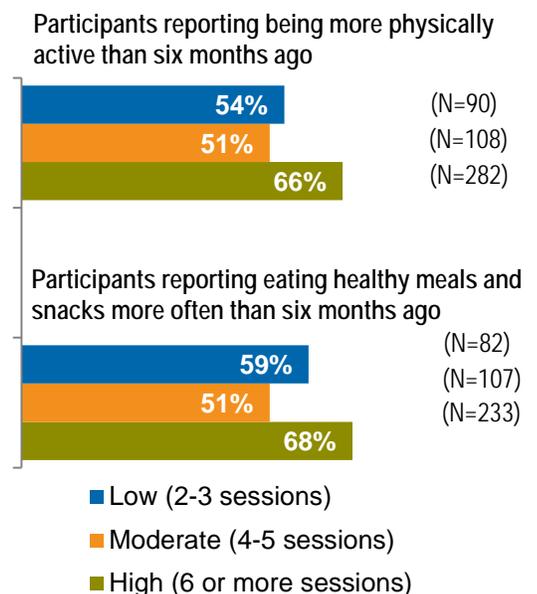


FIGURE 2: PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS WHO REPORTED CHANGES IN THEIR HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, BY FREQUENCY OF INVOLVEMENT



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### For more information

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