



## CHECK. CHANGE. CONTROL.

### ALLIED PACIFIC OF CALIFORNIA SENIOR WELLNESS CENTER

#### Million Hearts in Action

[ Strategies for Achieving Million Hearts Goals ]



High blood pressure, or hypertension, is undertreated and underdiagnosed among all races and genders, and it can cause serious cardiovascular problems such as stroke, heart attack or heart failure. Among the Asian population, as with other ethnic groups, language barriers or cultural influences can create disparities in communication with healthcare providers and in health-seeking behavior. To help address some of these issues, Allied Pacific of California's Senior Wellness Center in Alhambra is working through the American Heart Association to offer Check.Change.Control.

#### [ Fast Facts ]

- APC Senior Wellness Center opened in January 2012 to serve the ethnically diverse communities of the San Gabriel Valley, including immigrant populations from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam and others. The program focuses on prevention and education for Allied Pacific's senior Medicare patients.
- The center sees an average of 1,000 patients a week through fitness classes, health screenings, information seminars and chronic disease interventions such as Check. Change. Control. (CCC) Each 16-week session of CCC, an evidence-based blood pressure monitoring program, has 30 to 40 participants with a diagnosis of hypertension.

#### [ What We Did ]

- As of spring 2015, through our collaboration with the American Heart Association on CCC, we served 130 clients ranging in age from 65 to 86. Here is a link to a video we made about the effort: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7Jr9F3n0\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7Jr9F3n0_g)
- We adapted and expanded the original community-level CCC program to meet the needs of our patients, which now includes eight weekly meetings and two months of follow-up blood pressure screenings, along with mentoring. The entire program is conducted in three languages, Mandarin, Cantonese, and English. All written materials have been translated and each topic is presented in a culturally sensitive manner for greatest impact.
- Each meeting features blood pressure readings, 15 minutes of light exercise and a 45-minute interactive presentation. Topics presented by a team of professionals, including a physician, a pharmacist, a kinesiologist, and a nutritionist, include: how hypertension is related to heart disease and stroke; nutrition; the importance of measuring blood pressure; safe physical activity and how it effects blood pressure; and the value of properly taking medications.
- We partnered with the University of Southern California's School of Pharmacy. Second- and third-year students who speak Mandarin or Cantonese mentor the CCC participants through weekly telephone calls. Mentors answer questions and follow up on how clients are applying what they have learned. CCC participants are encouraged to attend quarterly medication reviews hosted by the USC School of Pharmacy at the Wellness Center.
- The final session highlights how to talk to a doctor – what to talk about, what to notice, how to take notes, and to prepare questions in advance to address important issues.



- To identify participants, we run a report on the more than 150,000 patients that are part of the IPA and target those who are at least 65 years old and on Medicare, with a diagnosis of hypertension. These patients, and those members of the Wellness Center that have been identified with high blood pressure, are invited to an informative seminar, about the basics of blood pressure and how to get it under control. From that meeting, we encourage them to register for the CCC program. In addition, doctors may refer their patients directly.



**It is our mission to give our clients the tools they need to make positive lifestyle choices that will help keep them as healthy for as long as possible.”**

*- Mary Claire Kitayama, Director of Senior Programs, APC Senior Wellness Center*

## [ What We Accomplished ]

- We have seen improvement in blood pressure among all participants. The average reduction in systolic is 11mmHg and the average decrease in diastolic of 8mmHg. For every point we drop, we can reduce the risk of stroke dramatically. According to the AHA, research shows lowering blood pressure by just 5 points reduces the overall risk of death from any cause by 7 percent.
- Since we began offering CCC in the fall of 2013, we have been able to raise awareness, among all our patients on the importance of controlling hypertension through diet, exercise and medication compliance. Patients better understand how lifestyle choices impact overall health. Today, we offer the program three times per year.
- We addressed more needs by adding diabetes education, which wasn't originally part of the CCC program, in fall 2014, as we saw a link between patients with hypertension and diabetes.
- Patients are stronger; their waist to-hip ratio and BMI are better, and their endurance is improved.



## [ What We Learned ]

- Socialization is a big part of this program because this particular Asian community can be relatively isolated. We now find patients are happier, more focused and more willing to adjust their lifestyle.
- We learned through this and other programming that we have to use appropriate translations and culturally-correct examples for the patients to apply what they learn to their daily lives. We have to discuss food and concepts that are familiar.
- While the traditional CCC model stresses mentorship, our program also stresses education. We first have to start with the basics and increase their knowledge base and what it means to have high blood pressure before we introduce the supportive concept of mentoring.

## [ What We Are Doing Now ]

- We are using this particular model while expanding our outreach in the Los Angeles area. This means offering more CCC programs every year to more patients. Beyond that, we are looking at ways to offer similar prevention programming to patients with other chronic conditions such as arthritis, diabetes and pre-hypertension.

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