

Tackling Nutrition Literacy Among the Homeless

Providing Hope through Healthy Food Habits Program

Umu Kanu Healthcare Studies

Introduction

Bridgewell Recuperative Care Center is a short-term residential care to people who are homeless and sick but not sick enough to be in a hospital (www.Bridgewell.org)

- The center provides coordination of homeless adults. Providing a safe place to recover along with reducing emergency department visit (www.Bridgewell.org).
- They work to coordinate with area hospitals, the criminal justice system and community agencies to identify people in need and support on their path to recovery (www.nhchc.org)
- Bridgewell works with community partners to encourage prevention and substance use education (www.Bridgewell.org).
- Each person receives individualized care specific for their needs (www.nhchc.org).



Related Literature

- Medical respite care provides short-term residential care that allows homeless individuals to rest while receiving medical care for acute illness or injury (O'Connell, 2005)
- Living in the street after hospital discharge creates competing priorities for homeless patients (O'Connell, 2005)
- Having challenges such as obtaining healthy food (Buchanan, 2006)
- Access to transportation for follow up appointments. to the hospital (Buchanan, 2006).
- Finding a safe and clean place to rest to continue with their medications and taking a shower (O'Connell, 2006)

Objectives

- Increase knowledge of nutrition
- Gain ability to read food labels
- Understand healthier food options

Materials and Methods

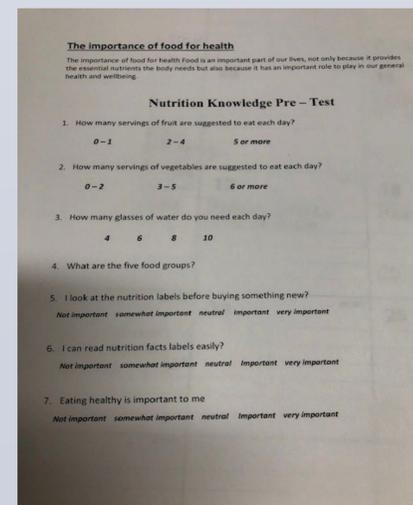
Participants:

- All adults (male and female)
- There were six male and five female participants to complete the survey.
- Average age each guest was 50 years old
- All completed survey
- Participants completed pre- and post-surveys to assess their knowledge of basic nutrition and gain insight of their interests

Methods:

Upon reviewing surveys with current guests, Healthy Living and Nutrition groups were created:

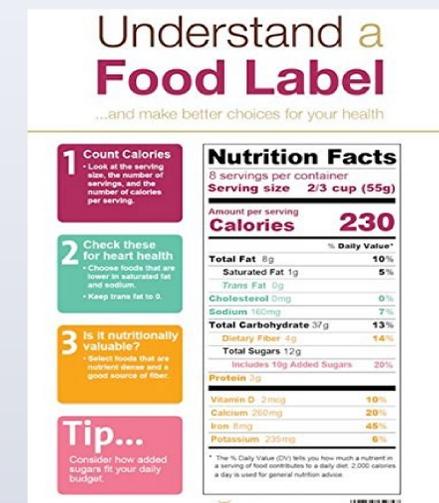
- Each group was given fact sheets on nutrition
- Discussed healthy food choices upon discharge
- Assisted with reading food labels
- Taught guests healthy life skills about nutrition how to choose healthier options



To the left is the survey completed by the guests

Results

- I had the current guests (11) complete a survey on nutrition and reading food label, with questions including if *“they were able to read labels”* and *“how important they felt reading food labels while shopping”*.
- 11 guests completed the survey with the following result:
- 8 out of 11 guests did not know how to read food labels.
- 10 out of 11 did not feel reading food labels as “important”.
- The post survey yielded increased understanding of the importance of reading food labels. Nine out of 11 guests did think reading and understanding food labels was “important”



www.fda.gov

Conclusion

After the completion of the nutrition groups with the guests in conjunction with reviewing handouts on reading food labels, I found that the guests had an increased understanding on the importance of reading food labels as seen by the post survey in which only 2 out of the 11 now did not feel reading food labels as “Important.”

I learned skills that I could offer my future healthcare career that included providing guests with knowledge on nutrition, especially comprehension of food labels. I also taught guests healthy food habits they can utilize in their everyday lives. Information on different food options and healthier substitutions will continue to be helpful for guests upon discharge from the program.