

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Prescription for Health connects the medical system and the food sector by creating a relationship between clinic staff, their patients and local farmers markets. Health care providers write “prescriptions” for their patients to eat more fruits and vegetables. Participants receive tokens to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets.
- Public Health implemented Quality Improvement (QI) strategies to standardize program processes and increase program participation, with positive results.
- In 2014, Public Health received a \$294,000 grant from the Kresge Foundation to continue to improve and refine the program over the next two years.



Performance Improvement Success Story - Prescription for Health

Taking a program from good to great

In the summer of 2008, Public Health launched Prescription for Health as a pilot program to encourage patients at Ypsilanti health clinics to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption by shopping at the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers Market. The impetus behind the program included the theory that many clinic patients were simply unaware of the farmers market as a healthy food resource and lacked knowledge of the relationship between eating fruits and vegetables and managing their chronic disease.

The Kresge Foundation saw the promising approach to this model and agreed to fund the program for two years. The program proved successful at increasing fruit and vegetable consumption for those who actually attended the market and utilized the program. However, the problem at hand was the high rate of patients who did not engage with the program, and who were enrolled but did not attend the market even once.

Quality Improvement Theory:

Our hypothesis for the low utilization rate was that patients were not fully vetted before enrolling in the program to determine if they had the ability, and the desire, to actually attend the farmers markets. As a result, our staff conducted a quality improvement project to break down the patient selection and enrollment process and to determine which methods would be best to ensure full program utilization. Our quality improvement project goal was to *increase the number of clinics that utilize a standardized Prescription for Health enrollment process from 20% (1 clinic) to 100% by December 31, 2013.*

In order to improve market attendance rates among program participants, all clinics agreed to follow a standard enrollment procedure based on the structured process developed by the Neighborhood Family Health Center, whose participants had achieved the best program participation results.

Before the start of enrollment for the 2013 season, Public Health team members met with all participating clinics and walked through our quality improvement tools, including process flow charts and RACI charts.

Staff reviewed the previous process flow charts from 2012 and compared them to the improved, detailed enrollment process flow charts for 2013.

The RACI chart was also used to help each clinic outline tasks and clearly define staff responsibilities for who is **R**esponsible, **A**ccountable, **C**onsulted and **I**nformed for each task associated with the program (*see chart*).

Steps will be highlighted if A and R are not assigned

STEP	DESCRIPTION	Jennifer	Volunteers	Karen	Fredrick/Mia	PHH
1	Display program promotional materials: PHH materials will be displayed in clinic	A/R	R			
2	Recruit Patients: explain program briefly and provide referral forms to patients who are a good fit for program	A/R	R	R	R	
3	Collects referral forms: Collect form from patients and place in folder at front desk for PHH collector	A/R	R	R	R	
4	Assists with referral calls: As needed assist OHA with referral calls	A	R			
5	Schedule space for enrollment visits: Schedule and prep room for group enrollment visits	A/R				
6	Supervise group enrollment visits: Attend group enrollment and assist where needed	A/R	R			I
7	Collects pre-survey and fax copy: Collect materials after group enrollment and place in folder for PHH staff collection	A/R	R			I
8	Assists with follow-up calls: As needed assist OHA with follow-up calls	A	R			
9	PHH contact persons: make and receive communication regarding program from WCHH staff and distribute communication to clinic staff as needed	A/R		R		
10	All clinic staff are informed of PHH: All clinic staff should have basic working knowledge of the Farmers' market and PHH program	A/R		R		

Washtenaw County Public Health Post

Key Findings:

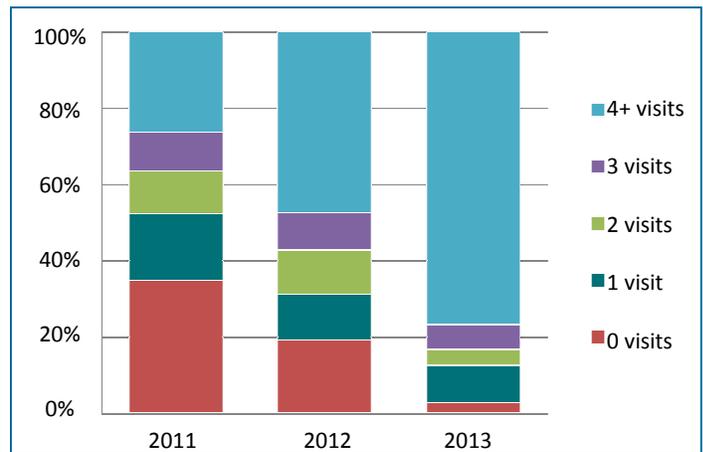
During the 2013 market season, the Prescription for Health program saw improvements in numerous areas. All partner clinics were able to follow key elements in the improved process flow chart, including integration of a more detailed referral process with a standard referral sheet used across all clinics. In addition, clinics incorporated group enrollment visits for program participants and abided by the tasks documented in the RACI chart.

Another improvement was the integration of Community Health Advocates into the program. The Community Health Advocates assisted with calling patients to remind them about the program, and offered education and support at the markets. They also were able to connect the patients with other community resources, such as housing and food stamp benefits.

The program saw a vast increase in participant market attendance rates and utilization of Prescription for Health tokens in 2013 (see chart). The percentage of participants who did not visit the market at all decreased from 30% in 2011 to only 0.02% in 2013!

During 2014 program planning, all participating clinics will enter into a Shared Services Agreement. This agreement will focus on clinics implementing the established standardized enrollment process and flow chart, which includes the clinics hosting group enrollment visits and group support sessions. Clinics will also utilize the RACI chart to establish roles and responsibilities for the specific program implementation components.

Prescription for Health Participant Market Visits



Program Recognition:

In 2012, the Public Health Foundation's *Future of Public Health Award* was awarded to the Prescription for Health program. The award recognized Prescription for Health's promise to generate measurable outcomes benefiting the future of public health through applied quality improvement. As a result of the award, a quality improvement expert from the Public Health Foundation trained Public Health staff to address their identified areas for improvement using quality improvement methods.

In 2013, the Prescription for Health quality improvement project was featured by the Public Health Foundation as a [case study of a promising practice](#).

In 2014, the Kresge Foundation agreed to fund the Prescription for Health program for an additional two years and \$294,000. Under this grant award, Public Health will continue to refine and improve the program through continuous quality improvement, and will create a program implementation guide that other agencies can use to replicate the program in their community.

For more information:

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