

# Building the Case for Enhanced Client Engagement for Obesity Prevention through Health Coaching

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Obesity Prevention Webinar Series

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# Disclosure



# Learning Objectives:

1. Define and identify the value of the educator/provider-participant relationship.
1. Identify the drivers of change.



# Health Education and Health Promotion

- Two terms which are sometimes used interchangeably.
- Health education is about providing health information and knowledge to individuals and communities and providing skills to enable individuals to adopt healthy behaviors voluntarily. It is a combination of learning experiences designed to help individuals and communities improve their health, by increasing their knowledge or influencing their attitudes, whereas
- Health promotion takes a more comprehensive approach to promoting health by involving various players and focusing on multisectoral approaches. Health promotion has a much broader perspective and it is tuned to respond to developments which have a direct or indirect bearing on health such as inequities, changes in the patterns of consumption, environments, cultural beliefs, etc.(3)

# Health Promotion: An Effective Tool for Global Health

Health, as the World Health Organization (WHO) defines, is the state of complete physical, social and mental well being and not just the absence of disease or infirmity. The enjoyment of highest attainable standard of health is considered as one of the fundamental rights of every human being. (5) Over the past few decades, there is **an increasing recognition that biomedical interventions alone cannot guarantee better health**. **Health is heavily influenced by factors outside the domain of the health sector, especially social, economic and political forces**. These forces largely shape the circumstances in which people grow, live, work and age as well as the systems put in place to deal with health needs ultimately leading to inequities in health between and within countries.(6) Thus, the attainment of the highest possible standard of health depends on a comprehensive, holistic approach which goes beyond the traditional curative care, involving communities, health providers and other stakeholders. This holistic approach should empower individuals and communities to take actions for their own health, foster leadership for public health, promote intersectoral action to build healthy public policies and create sustainable health systems in the society. These elements **capture the essence of “health promotion”, which is about enabling people to take control over their health and its determinants, and thereby improve their health. It includes interventions at the personal, organizational, social and political levels to facilitate adaptations (lifestyle, environmental, etc.) conducive to improving or protecting health.**(1,2)

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Diabesity

Health



*With diabetes consuming up to 5% of global GDP, stabilising the obesity epidemic will be the primary focus for many nations' healthcare priorities*

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- In addressing lifestyle-related chronic disease, apathy and overcoming resistance with adopting active lifestyles requires skill sets and new approaches for setting in motion new habits. Building self-confidence knowledge and helping participants transcend engrained self-defeating habits, requires meeting people where they are at, thus, this requires creating programs and engaging participants that lead to sustained well-being.

Despite the limited success of available interventions in reversing the current trends in obesity prevalence, approaches focusing on individual behavior change remain an important topic of interest in obesity research. Several reasons justify this assertion.

**First**, these interventions typically focus on behaviors (for example, diet and physical activity), which have widespread consequences for health, with or without weight loss.

**Second**, if and when individuals are able to successfully self-regulate their behaviors, these effects tend to be sustainable, which is essential for having a lasting impact on health; moreover, this successful self-regulation may also “transfer” to, and help change, other health behaviors (Mata, et al., 2009).

**Third**, although some interventions targeting individuals may be ineffective on their own, they might be able to contribute to the effectiveness of strategies that integrate multiple levels (that is, strategies that include individual- level and environmental-level approaches) (Lakerveld, et al., 2012)

The focus on patient engagement stems from a belief that the actions of health professionals constitute only part of the effort necessary to help people cope with the effects of illness or disability and restore them to the best possible state of health. An equally, if not more, important part is played by patients themselves, their families, and communities as coproducers of health.

# Patient Engagement and Patient Activation

“Patient Engagement” refers to actions individuals must take in order to benefit from the healthcare system (Gruman, et al., 2010).

“Patient activation” has been defined as the cultivation of knowledge, skills, and confidence to manage one’s own health (Hibbard, 2004).

Low patient engagement and activation stem from a wide range of internal and external barriers, including low awareness of risk, limited perspectives on possible improvements, distrust of providers, values conflicts, competing commitments, social pressures, and/or environmental obstacles at home or work. Physicians and other clinicians typically lack the necessary time and expertise to explore issues related to behavior change with patients (WHO, 2008).

As a result, the need for a mechanism for successful, sustained patient engagement and activation—a crucial component of chronic disease prevention—is not met in the current system (Mezzich, 2011).

# Setting the Stage...

“Health and Wellness coaches will help catalyze a transformation in healthcare. The time is now for a new model of care—one that is relationship-centered and prevention focused, and health and wellness coaches are leading the way.”

--Pamela Peeke MD, MPH, national spokesperson for the American College of Sports Medicine’s “Exercise is Medicine” campaign, and advisor to the U.S. Surgeon General—

# Background: Need

- Health behavior-related chronic diseases (obesity, diabetes, etc.) are leading to a crisis in health care, and public & private finances – systemic condition...policy, systems and environmental changes to balance out individual/lifestyle drivers
- Current healthcare system was designed to manage acute disease and not chronic health-behavior related disease
- *Health professionals are not trained and reimbursed to support patient engagement and health behavior change as a means to treating and preventing chronic disease*

# Health Coaching Distinctions

## **Health Education & Counseling**

- Medical model
- Diagnosable illness in paradigm of pathology
- Focus on fixing a problem
- Professional as expert
- “Why” questions with present and past focus
- Restore client’s level of functioning

## **Health Coaching**

- Learning/developmental model
- Desirable goals & achievement in paradigm of possibility
- Focus on optimal performance
- Coach as non-judgmental partner of equal stature
- “How” questions with present and future focus
- Move client to personal fulfillment or optimal performance

# Health Coaching is Based on...Drivers of Change

80+ yrs psychology research that demonstrates key features to human motivation, how adults learn, and sustain change:

- Growth-promoting relationships - mutuality
- Importance of personalized vision
- Relationship of goal selection to an individual's core values and sense of purpose

Patients are life-long learners whose individual values, sense of purpose and capacity for interpersonal connectedness facilitate their potential for change.

# 25+ Years of Behavioral Science

- Behavioral medicine research
  - Interventions must provides skills; education is necessary but far from sufficient
  - Addition of active problem-solving skills and self-discovery to integrate learning
  - Motivational Interviewing style of counseling
- These approaches focus not on pathology, but on behavior change

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# Emerging Field of Behavioral Economics

- Helps us to understand role of contextual factors in decision making
- Useful for engagement and habit formation
  
- However, must tap deeper levels of motivation to sustain change in current environments

Source: (copyright) 2008 Duke Integrative Medicine/Duke University Medical Center

# National Consortium for Credentialing Health & Wellness Coaches ([ncchwc.org](http://ncchwc.org))



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# Thank You!



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