

Improving Communication to Increase Uptake of the Geaux Get Healthy Clinical Program

Authors: Nhung Ngo¹, Sloan Robinson¹, Antrice Johnson², Alexis Kador², Tiffany Ardoin, MD, FACP^{1, 2}

Affiliations: LSUHSC School of Medicine New Orleans¹; Our Lady of the Lake Hospital²

Background: Geaux Get Healthy (GGH) is an evidence-based community program that improves food insecurity in Baton Rouge, Louisiana by providing free nutrition education, hands-on cooking classes, grocery store tours, and access to healthy food resources. Although barriers such as transportation have been addressed, program uptake has remained low, with only 42% of referred participants enrolling in 2024. Qualitative feedback suggested limited awareness of the program and unclear communication about its offerings.

Objectives: To increase enrollment in GGH.

Methods: We implemented a multimodal communication strategy including creation of social media accounts (Instagram and Facebook), development of a program website, increased distribution of printed materials with links to digital resources, presence at community events, provider education at primary care meetings, and follow-up notifications (email, text, call) to interested participants. Outcomes included the number of referrals and enrollments, enrollment rate, and social media metrics comparing the pre-intervention period (March–May) with the post-intervention period (July–September). Surveys also asked participants who self-referred, “How did you hear about us?”

Results: Referrals decreased from 151 in the pre-intervention period to 104 post-intervention, while enrollments increased from 21 to 39. Consequently, the enrollment rate increased from 13.9% to 37.5%. Social media presence grew from 0 to 81 followers, with an average of 173 views and 3 interactions per post. Survey responses regarding program awareness indicated that 7 participants learned about GGH through healthcare providers, 2 through outreach events, 2 through the website, and none through social media; 7 selected “other.”

Conclusions: A multimodal communication strategy was associated with increased program enrollment despite fewer overall referrals, suggesting improved understanding of program offerings and increased conversion of referrals to enrollments. Although we believe that current metrics do not accurately assess the value of social media outreach, clear communication and provider engagement appear critical to improving uptake of such programs.

Recommendations: Future efforts should focus on improving tracking of social media exposure across all referral methods and expanding targeted digital outreach to increase program awareness. Longer evaluation periods are needed to assess sustainability and long-term impact on participation.

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