

PROJECT BRIEF

Weight Management for a Defined Employee Population using an Interactive eHealth Portal

Background

The extraordinary and burgeoning impact of the Internet on daily life is well-known to consumers, service providers, researchers and policy-makers alike. Online health tools have the potential of creating behavioral health changes. Meanwhile, overweight and obesity have reached epidemic proportions in the United States. This study is designed to study the effects of on-line weight management techniques on health outcomes of employees of a large urban hospital that is part of an integrated health care organization serving nearly one-third of the state's population in eastern central Wisconsin.

Objectives

To determine whether a set of Internet-based weight management tools:

- Is effective in inducing weight loss beyond that of standard environmental programs in a hospital employee population
- Is effective in improving secondary outcome measures including insulin resistance, blood pressures, physical and psychological quality of life, and total and HDL cholesterol
- Is cost-beneficial

Phase I Activities

- Recruitment of 500 subjects from the employee pool in the Aurora Health Care Metro region
- Baseline biometric measures, laboratory tests, and questionnaires
- Experimental group subjects given detailed introductions to My Aurora Internet-based weight management tools. Control subjects did not have access to the Internet tools

Phase II Activities

- Four additional biometric screenings and rounds of questionnaires were administered
- Provided information about healthy lifestyles via email newsletters to the both groups
- Tracked use of the Internet tools by experimental group and made contact with participants encouraging them to use the tools
- Feedback and participant satisfaction surveys given at the end of the study

Phase III Activities

- Data analysis and results dissemination

Funding Source

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Key Partners

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The Center for Urban Population Health is a partnership among the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Aurora Health Care, Inc. Our mission is advancing population health research and education to improve the health of urban communities.