

Benjamin A. Aunins¹, Caroline A. Lynch¹, Laura E. Tweedie¹, Audrey T. McCartney¹, Meghan E. St. John¹, Stephanie M. Shi¹, Sarah J. Wagner¹, Austin L. Songer¹, Dhruv Kohli¹, Ronay J. Thomas¹, William R. Fusillo¹, Tommy Clifton²

¹University of Cincinnati College of Medicine; ²The Healing Center

Abstract

Background

•The Healing Center is a ministry of Vineyard Cincinnati Church that offers practical, social, and spiritual support to individuals and families.

•The Healing Center currently offers a recurring cooking class to its guests called Kitchen HC.

•The Marketplace at the Healing Center offers guests a variety of free grocery items including squash and beans.

Service Objective

•Increase self-reported knowledge of healthy cooking principles and recipes for guests at the Healing Center.

Learning Objective

•Understand how the social determinants of health correlate with a generalized knowledge of good nutrition.

Introduction

The Healing Center is a large non-profit organization in Springdale, OH that offers an array of services to its guests including support groups, spiritual care, and cooking classes. Other community assets in Springdale include the Vineyard Cincinnati Church and the robust sense of togetherness. Most guests served by the Healing Center are of low socioeconomic status and diverse backgrounds, but may not have received guidance in the areas of nutrition and food preparation. Thus, for this project we decided to target education as our determinant of health.

To address this knowledge gap, we created a reusable resource that could improve the nutrition education of Healing Center guests. Learning Community 14 of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine Class of 2022 worked with Tommy Clifton and other staff members of the Healing Center throughout the 2018-2019 school year to design and distribute a series of informational tip sheets related to nutrition and cooking. One of the goals of creating these tip sheets was to help guests at the Healing Center learn how to prepare basic food items such as squash, beans, and cabbage that are frequently distributed at the Healing Center marketplace.

Methods

The purpose of this project was to designate a need of the guests served at the Healing Center and create a meaningful and sustainable resource to address this need. To do this, we interviewed a total of 28 Healing Center guests on Thursday, December 6th and Saturday, December 8th, 2018 using an 18-question survey. Questions on the survey covered topics such as demographic information, access to healthcare, and community health issues of concern. Results were compiled and analyzed for common themes among guest comments (Figure 1). Health issues impacted by nutrition were identified in a plurality of guest comments. Thus, we agreed with our community partner to design tip sheets containing dietary and nutritional information to facilitate healthy living habits. Recipes utilizing foods commonly distributed from the Healing Center marketplace, grocery shopping guides, and food storage tips were incorporated into concise 8.5x11-inch tip sheets (Figure 2) using Canva, a free online graphic design program. These printed tip sheets were distributed to guests at the Healing Center on Saturday April 6th, 2019 (Figure 3). The handouts are currently available to Tommy Clifton through the Canva account for future use.

Most Mentioned Health Topics by The Healing Center Guests

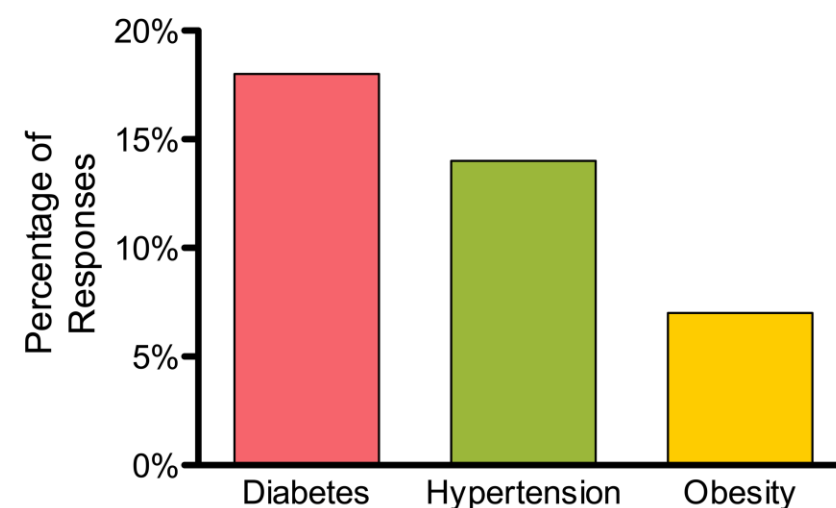


Figure 1. Most Frequent Community Health Issues of Concern Mentioned By Healing Center Guests

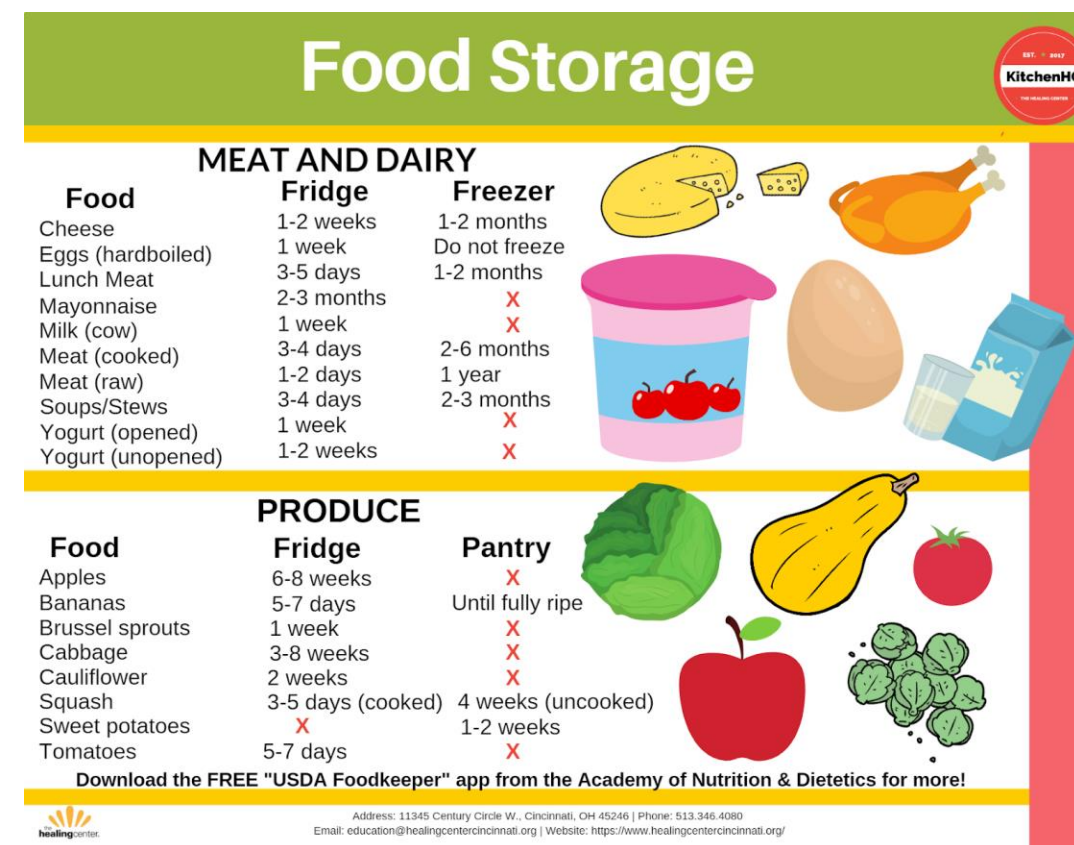


Figure 2. Food Storage Tip Sheet

Results

As depicted in Figure 1, the top 3 most common community health issues of concern designated by Healing Center guests were diabetes (18% of respondents), hypertension (14% of respondents), and obesity (7% of respondents). Since healthy cooking and nutrition habits can play a large role in the management of all three of the aforementioned health issues, these results drove our decision to fill the need for nutrition education at the Healing Center. Upon distributing our tip sheets, we received positive feedback from Healing Center guests regarding the usefulness and applicability of the content for their cooking practices.

Conclusion

We were satisfied with our ability to create a meaningful and sustainable resource for Healing Center guests to improve their knowledge of cooking principles. We received positive feedback about the tip sheets and guests expressed interest in continuing to learn more about our project topic. Based on a majority of positive feedback from guests, we can conclude that our service and learning objectives were met. Small sample size and communication issues with our community partner presented barriers to accomplishing our objectives. Determining how to achieve our project aim earlier in the year would have given us more time to create and refine our tip sheets and their distribution. Through this experience, we learned how to directly contribute to the greater Cincinnati community with our knowledge base as medical students. In addition, we gained an appreciation of the community values and needs for both Springdale and greater Cincinnati. Our hope is that our tip sheets can be integrated and reused within the Kitchen HC curriculum at the Healing Center for years to come.



Figure 3. Members of LC 14 Distributing Tip Sheets at the Healing Center

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