

The known and unknown. Two sides to our non-clinical Self-Measured Blood Pressure's purpose and the outcomes at the Mitchell Recreation Center

Summary

Mitchell has had a wonderful system of trails and parks to promote activity in abundance for years. Access to physical activity opportunities has remained at 84% for the last 7 years, and a big reason for that is trails and parks, along with private and public fitness facilities. However, if you have to pay for a membership and can't afford that, or if you have a chronic condition that prevents you from safely exercising on your own in a public space, that means your access would drop severely. This is why The Mitchell Recreation Center implemented Cardio Index in 2020. The Cardio Index program gives reduced membership rates to help target those risks for cardiovascular disease. Participants get a blood pressure cuff to take home for free for 7 days so they can monitor their blood pressure and return those results to their primary care provider. Participants also get free supervision during exercise sessions to the participants, increasing access to those community members with low socioeconomic standing. This has allowed all residents to truly have access to appropriate physical activity opportunities.

The Mitchell Recreation Center is approaching 200 participants community wide in the Cardio Index program, and averaging 5-10 new ones a month right now. Cardio Index has gained traction among physicians in the Mitchell community and are seeing more referrals now than ever in the program. The results for each participant vary, from seeing a drop in average blood pressure results to creating a well-rounded fitness program that they can follow, to losing mass amounts of weight. The primary goal with each participant is to set them up for success and allow them to create a healthy environment that supports positive decision making in multiple facets of their lives. The staff at the Mitchell Recreation Center feel that the community has embraced our program and will continue to see positive results in lifestyle modification and healthy choice making moving forward.

Results

This past year, the Mitchell Recreation Center has had almost 50 participants enrolled in the self-measured blood pressure program. Some of the most positive outcomes from the program come from the diverse nature that it has been developed from and how inclusive it is for different community members. The program serves two primary populations, which has been what it has evolved into. First, those community members who do not monitor their blood pressure on a regular basis, but may or may not have been instructed by a physician to do so, and second, community members who have had a cardiac event, and are going through or finishing cardiac rehab, and are looking to continue their wellness journey. There are many people who have started the program, and during their blood pressure monitoring, figured out they have hypertension and have made an appointment with their primary care provider because of the readings they were seeing at home, and been prescribed medication to control their blood pressure. Following this, the staff continue to work with them on lifestyle modification program, and establish new baselines based on their medication usage. Many participants who seek the program out or are referred to the program because they have suffered a cardiac event, and need to enroll in the lifestyle modification program. Sometimes they are actively in cardiac rehab as well, and sometimes they have

graduated from this program, but either way, the staff at the Mitchell Recreation center possess the experience and credentials necessary to supervise them during exercise sessions, and have built credibility through implementation of the program. Both of these scenarios come up often, and have established a foundation of participation in the program.

Future Decisions

The next steps are to engage private businesses around the state to get this program into multiple cities by next year! Utilizing this as an enrollment tool will allow them to develop a rapport with each member, along with screening hundreds of additional people at home to sniff out hypertension!

Short term goals:

- Continue to enroll 5 or more participants a month
- Establish new guidelines for additional program enrollment
- Use cardio index as a portion for an overarching weight management program

Long term goals:

- Create a new higher education class teaching fitness professionals how to engage and interact with the DOH and create new, creative programming centered around preventive medicine
- Implement cardio index in private settings across the state as a new member enrollment package
- Increase the referral base to within 30 miles of Mitchell

““ *Cardio Index has been a perfect transition from cardiac rehab into a full fitness program; I am looking forward to getting more exercise and watching what I eat!* ””

- Anyonymous

Get Involved

For additional information on this project or to learn more about HDSPP funding opportunities, contact Brianne Holbeck, Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Coordinator at Brianne.Holbeck@state.sd.us or 605-367-7207.

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