



## Minneapolis Health Care Referral Project

The purpose of this project is to increase patient referrals from clinics to community resources providing high quality nutritious foods, opportunities for physical activity, and tobacco cessation.

The Hennepin County SHAPE 2006-Adult Survey indicated:

- 54% of adults were either obese or overweight
- 63% of overweight adults had never received weight loss advice from their health care provider

The 2010 Minneapolis SHIP Clinic Staff/Provider Survey indicated:

- 7% of providers and 14% of staff surveyed refer all or most at-risk patients to obesity and nutrition resources
- 71% of providers and staff surveyed indicate that a referral system or mechanism would assist them in making referrals for obesity and tobacco cessation

### Goals

- Develop a resource system that health care providers can use to refer patients to clinic- and community-based programs and services for obesity and tobacco cessation.
- Assist clinics in identifying and pursuing third-party reimbursement for obesity and tobacco cessation resources that are appropriate to offer at the clinic setting.

### Key Strategies

- Build partnerships between clinics and community leaders to facilitate **direct referral pipelines** between clinics and community organizations.
- Develop a **core network of accessible and affordable Minneapolis programs and services** and establish a system for clinic referrals to this network of community organizations.
- Establish a broad-based **health and wellness resource clearinghouse** (database or directory) to maintain all available resources across jurisdictions.
- Establish a **clinic fax referral system**, similar to the MN Tobacco Clinic Fax Referral program, to connect patients to health and wellness resources offered through their health plan.
- **Pursue reimbursement** for supportive services from health plans and other funding sources, including establishing uniform billing codes for services.



This Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support program is funded through the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Program.

## Creating a Healthier Minneapolis healthy eating + physical activity + smoke-free living

## Project Partnerships

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) will work with the following 9 Minneapolis primary care clinics and 1 clinic system to identify patient resources for physical activity, nutrition and tobacco cessation; develop a system and clinic processes for easy and efficient referrals to these resources; and implement and evaluate the referral system, including gaining reimbursement for services where possible.

- AXIS Medical Center
- Broadway Family Medicine
- Neighborhood HealthSource (Fremont, Central and Sheridan Clinics)
- Neighborhood Involvement Program
- NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center
- Park Nicollet system (Minneapolis pilot site)
- Phillips Neighborhood Clinic
- The People's Center Medical Clinic

MDHFS is also working in collaboration with a variety of health care stakeholders, community organizations, SHIP grantees, and the Minnesota Department of Health to broaden the scope and impact of this work locally and statewide.

## Baseline Assessment Results

In May-July 2010 partnering clinics completed the following activities: clinic assessments, staff/provider and patient surveys, and staff/provider focus groups. Some key findings are:

- When referring patients, providers and staff are interested in providing patients with 3-5 free or minimal cost clinic- and community-based resources that meet cultural and language needs.
- Provider referral barriers are: unaware of resources, insufficient support systems (resource database, referral/follow-up system), lack of referral resources, and lack of patient/family interest.
- Patients are interested in the following places and programs for exercise, nutrition, and tobacco:
  - Trails and parks, fitness centers, public recreation centers, and farmer's markets
  - Walking, jogging, and running; exercise machines; group classes for exercise and nutrition
  - Individual face-to-face counseling/coaching and support groups
- Patient referral barriers are: high cost, no insurance, inconvenient hours, and no childcare

## Contact Information

Lara Pratt, MPH, SHIP Manager Minneapolis, (612) 673-3815, [lara.pratt@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:lara.pratt@minneapolismn.gov)

