

# Health Wise

Inputs	Outputs			Outcomes	
<p>Campus and Field Faculty</p> <p><i>Healthwise for Life</i> Reference Book</p> <p>Partners and Collaborators</p> <p>Facilities</p> <p>Equipment &amp; Supplies</p>	Activities	Participation	Initial	Intermediate	Long Term
	<p>Development of educational materials for newsletters, the media, and UOE websites</p> <p>Workshops for adults over age 50.</p> <p>Work with partners at the local level in order to reach target audience and market the program</p>	<p># of UOE specialists educated</p> <p># of workshops taught</p> <p># of workshop participants educated</p> <p># of participant reactions to educational resources</p> <p># of articles written for newsletters and UOE websites</p>	<p># of UOE specialists more knowledgeable and skilled about strategies and programs related to medical self care and health care decision making.</p> <p># of community partners more aware of extension resources related to medical self-care and health care decision-making.</p>	<p>Individuals make increased use of a health care reference for making health care decisions.</p> <p>Individuals have increased knowledge of needed medical self care skills.</p> <p>Individuals perceive they are responsible for their own and their family's health.</p>	<p>Reduced number of unnecessary doctor visits.</p> <p>Individuals able to apply home treatment safely and effectively.</p> <p>Individuals with increased self-confidence about their ability to make health care decisions.</p> <p>Lower family health care costs.</p>
			<p># of UOE specialists report being more prepared to teach others about medical self-care.</p> <p># of community partners identified by UOE specialists</p>	<p><b>Indicators</b></p> <p># of program participants reporting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increased use of a self care reference</li> <li>belief that reference/ program would help with management of health problems</li> <li>belief that reference/ program would improve communication with doctor.</li> <li>belief that reference/ program would increase involvement in making treatment decisions.</li> </ul>	<p># of participants who 90 days after the workshop reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of the reference to make a decision about seeing a doctor.</li> <li>use of the reference improved quality of self care provided</li> <li>use of the reference improved communication with doctor.</li> <li>use of reference saved health care dollars</li> </ul>

*Health Wise* is a 90-minute educational workshop for individuals aged 50 and older. It is designed to improve the confidence and skill of participants to make decisions that promote improved health status and appropriate use of the health care system. Rather than expecting participants to remember large amount of health information over extended periods of time, participants are taught how to use a self-care reference to improve health decision-making. *Healthwise for Life* published by Healthwise, Inc., is the self-care reference used in the workshop.

University Outreach and Extension is evaluating this program in order to make sure that we are providing quality educational programs to Missouri residents. This information will be shared with those individuals who make decisions about Extension services and funding. This includes County Extension Councils, University of Missouri administrators, state legislators, and Extension's Federal Partner-USDA. The program evaluation examines three outcome measures: use of the provided reference, changes in health care utilization and savings in health care dollars. Information about participant satisfaction with the workshop was also gathered. The Institutional Review Board classified this program and its evaluation as exempt.

After five years of slow growth, U.S. health care spending resumed its upward climb in 1998. The national health bill is projected to double by 2007, hitting 2.1 trillion. Helping consumers reduce unnecessary and inappropriate use of the health care system is one strategy for helping to control costs. American's spend an estimated \$200 billion a year on unnecessary and inappropriate health care. Individuals and families can control health care costs by learning how to make better health and health care decisions.

In order to make effective self-care decisions people must have access to reliable information. Furthermore, they need access to that information when a health problem arises. Teaching individuals how to use a medical self-care reference meets this need. Medical Self-Care is not a substitute for professional health care. Rather it involves: (1) knowing how to work cooperatively with a physician when necessary; (2) being able to handle health problems at home safely and effectively; (3) being a wise consumer of health products and services; and (4) learning how to protect yourself and your family from preventable illness. In practical terms, self-care is already a fact of life. It is estimated that 50% to 80% of all health problems are treated at home. That important decision about when to call a doctor is almost always made by the individual. Some argue that even more self-care could be done, as many as 70% of all visits to doctors for new problems have been termed unnecessary. For example about 11% are for uncomplicated colds. Many others are for cuts that don't require stitches, for tetanus shots despite the fact that the person is current on their immunizations, and for minor ankle sprains. The dilemma faced by many individuals, however, is when to see a health care

provider and when to apply home treatment. This is an important decision. If getting professional care is delayed when it is needed, complications may develop or an individual may suffer unnecessary discomfort and pain. On the other hand, when an unnecessary visit to the doctor is made, it costs the individual money and time.

Programs designed to teach self-care skills have been around since the early 70s with a goal of helping consumers learn how to do a better job of something they do on almost a daily basis, make health care decisions. University Outreach and Extension has been programming in this area since 1984. Intended long-term outcomes of these efforts are reduced number of unnecessary doctor visits; individuals able to apply home treatment safely and effectively; individuals with increased self-confidence about their ability to make health care decisions and as a result lower family health care costs. Recently there has been a renewed interest in self-care by employers and managed care plans. Individuals are expected to take more responsibility for their own health. Managed care plans view self-care as one component of that responsibility. Companies that offer worksite health promotion/wellness programs are incorporating self-care into the program mix because such programs provide an immediate return in terms of a reduction in unnecessary health care visits and lower health care costs. University Outreach and Extension needs to take advantage of this interest.

A statewide needs assessment conducted as part of University Extension's deliberative group process found that health and health care were important issues in about 40% of Missouri counties. University Extension's medical self-care programs are designed to address these issues by providing information and teaching skills that can reduce health care costs and improve health care access and quality. This programming also relates to goals established for CDC's *Healthy People 2010*.

#### **Assumptions:**

1. Access to a self-care reference is important. Health consumers need accurate health information to make good health care decisions for themselves and their families and they need that information when faced with a particular health problem or concern.
2. Physicians and nurses often use references when faced with conditions they don't see frequently. Likewise, health consumers can learn how to use a reference to make better decisions about when to see a health care provider and when and how to safely take care of health problems at home.
3. Accomplishing the short-term outcome, e.g., use of a quality self-care reference, will contribute to the accomplishment of the intermediate outcomes of improved use of health care services and reduced health care costs.