



Wyoming's Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

Healthy U is the name for the Wyoming Center on Aging's implementation of the Self-Management Resource Center's renowned, evidence-based Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP). The program is delivered in 2.5-hour sessions, once a week for six weeks, and helps people with chronic disease play a more active and productive role in their own health management. Additionally, two variations of the program are available that target people with diabetes or those who struggle with chronic pain.

The subjects covered in the program include: (1) techniques to deal with problems like frustration, fatigue, pain, and isolation; (2) appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance; (3) appropriate use of medications; (4) communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals; (5) nutrition; (6) decision-making; and (7) how to evaluate new treatments.

Healthy U does not focus on any particular illness or symptoms and will not conflict with existing programs or treatment. It is designed to enhance regular treatment and disease-specific education. Program sessions are highly participative; mutual support and success build participants' confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives. This mutually supportive format makes the program especially effective and helps participants develop lasting support networks.

All Healthy U workshops are delivered by certified Master Trainers or Leaders. Master Trainers are typically health education professionals and receive one week of training delivered by staff at the Self-Management Resource Center. Leaders are typically volunteers, church members, senior center staff, patient educators, public health workers, or wellness advocates and receive four days of training delivered by experienced, certified Master Trainers.

This program was created at Stanford University and has been extensively studied, widely published, and peer-reviewed. In its initial evaluation, over 1,000 participants with chronic diseases were enrolled in a three-year, randomized, controlled study. Those who participated demonstrated a significant improvement in exercise, cognitive symptom management, communication with physicians, self-reported general health, health distress, fatigue, disability, and social/role activities limitations. They also spent fewer days in the hospital and tended toward fewer outpatient visits and hospitalizations. These data yield a cost-to-savings ratio of approximately 1:4.

In 2015, Wyoming became the fiftieth state to offer Stanford's CDSMP. With 43 facilitators in 15 counties across Wyoming, Healthy U is growing quickly and has been offered in medical centers, senior centers, subsidized housing, assisted living communities, colleges, and wellness centers. The program is fully funded and free for participants. The program is partially supported by a grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration; it also partially supported by and delivered in partnership with the Wyoming Department of Health Public Health Division and Aging Division.

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Self-Management Resource Center:

<https://www.selfmanagementresource.com/>

Wyoming Center on Aging Healthy U website:

<http://bit.ly/healthyuwyo>