HEALTHINFO

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SERVICES TEAM

Addressing Rural Health Needs Stroke Prevention in Haldimand and Norfolk

I. What do we know about stroke in Canada?

- In 2004, stroke was the third leading cause of death in Canada.
- Each year, more than 14,000 Canadians die from stroke.
- Every year, there are more than 50,000 strokes that occur in Canada.
- On average, a stroke occurs every 10 minutes in Canada.

2. What is stroke?

Stroke is the interruption of blood flow to the brain due to a blood clot or a blood vessel rupture.

3. What are the modifiable risk factors for stroke?

- I. High blood pressure.
- 2. High blood cholesterol.
- 3. Heart disease atrial fibrillation.
- 4. Diabetes.
- 5. Being overweight.
- 6. Excessive alcohol consumption.
- 7. Physical inactivity.
- 8. Smoking.
- 9. Stress.

4. What do we know about stroke in Haldimand and Norfolk?

• Deaths and hospitalizations from stroke are higher in Haldimand and Norfolk compared to Ontario (55 years and older).

5. What did we do?

- The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit along with the Stroke Prevention Advisory Committee, and the Regional Stroke Centre and Stroke Prevention Clinic of Hamilton developed The Step Up to a Healthier You program and evaluated it.
- The Step Up to a Healthier You program is a primary stroke prevention program that focuses on education and skill building.
- Education was provided by a multidisciplinary team including a Dietitian, Health Promoters, Nurses, Pharmacists and Fitness Leaders.
- Topics included: physical activity, healthy eating, blood pressure and blood cholesterol, smoking cessation, alcohol in moderation and stress reduction.
- The program was offered in a class setting and is now accessible to anyone online at www.stepuptoahealthieryou.com

6. How do we know if the program was effective?

Participants completed a survey before the program, at the end of the program, I month after the program and 3 months after the program.

7. What did we want to find out? If participants.....

- Increased their level of stroke knowledge after attending the program.
- Increased their intake of vegetables and fruit and consumed at least 7 servings of vegetables and fruit a day.
- Increased their current level of physical activity and engaged in physical activity for 150 minutes a week.
- Improved or maintained a healthy blood pressure of less than 140 mm Hg/90 mm Hg after attending the program.



8. What did we find out from the study?

- The program in a rural community was effective in improving knowledge about stroke and behavioural changes in the area of nutrition, specifically the consumption of vegetables and fruit, and physical activity.
- The proportion of participants who achieved a healthy blood pressure of less than 140 mm Hg/90 mm Hg did not increase after the program.

9. What did we find out about developing a stroke program in a rural community?

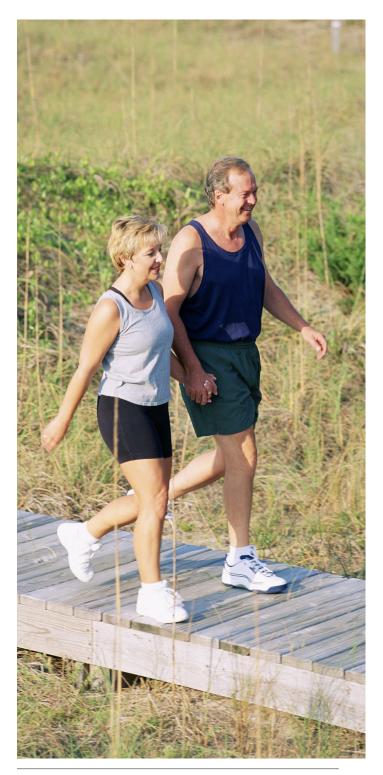
- Maximize rural health assets.
- Minimize rural health challenges.
- Foster a collaborative community approach.
- Use the Social Determinants of Health framework to guide your program.

The full report, Stroke Prevention in a Rural Community in Haldimand and Norfolk can be found on the Haldimand-Norfolk website at http://www.hnhu.org/index.php?option=com_content&vie w=article&id=1114<emid=82

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