

## **ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND:**

The Health Center at Tremont is part of a network of family practice offices affiliated with the North Bronx Healthcare Network (NBHN), part of the New York City Health & Hospitals Corporation (HHC). NBHN is composed of Jacobi Medical Center and North Central Bronx Hospital and affiliated community family practice offices. The mission of NBHN is to provide accessible quality comprehensive care to all individuals, regardless of ability to pay. The majority of our patients are medically underserved, uninsured or recipients of Medicaid/Medicare. We serve a culturally diverse patient population, primarily Latino, African-American, & immigrants from Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America.

## **PROGRAM TITLE:**

Stop Obesity Through Awareness, Prevention and Treatment, a program to help Latino & African-American adults & children learn to develop healthy eating habits and increase physical activity.

## **PROGRAM SUMMARY:**

Obesity is a problem in Latino & African-American communities, leading to heart disease & diabetes. Racial & ethnic disparities are evident in US: 29.3% of African-Americans, 23.4% of Latinos, & 18.5% of non-Latino whites are obese. To help patients lose weight, we must address cultural beliefs about body image & fat, patients' sense of empowerment to make lifestyle changes, & the larger support network of community groups such as church, school & extended family. This proposal seeks funding for development of a culturally sensitive approach to treat obesity & reverse the trend of poor eating habits & sedentary lifestyles in our Latino & African-American patients, & to educate our providers on the importance of cultural attitudes & understanding in reaching these goals.

## **DESCRIPTION OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

Reach 10,000 individuals in community with prevention & education efforts via obesity van, workshops, literature; reach 1000 obese individuals in more intense format: workshops, classes, park activities, peer support; achieve sustained weight loss in 250 individuals.

Train 15 providers at 3 family practice offices regarding cultural attitudes & understanding of lifestyle choices.

## **STATEMENT OF SPECIFIC NEEDS & ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED:**

Increase community's awareness of health consequences of obesity; develop culturally sensitive methods to motivate individuals to change eating habits & increase physical activity; develop community links to foster physical activity & healthy eating habits;

provide classes, obesity van & workshops to reinforce behavior change; educate providers re: cultural sensitivity.

**DESCRIPTION OF TARGET AUDIENCE/POPULATION:**

Our patient population is 70% Latino and 30% African-American, both populations showing high percentages of obesity nationwide, with consequent high rates of heart disease & diabetes. We will target people of all ages - children and adults. We will also educate our providers to understand the significance of cultural diversity in providing effective interventions.

**COLLABORATIONS OR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED WITH THE PROGRAM AND THEIR ROLE:**

1. Hispanic Center for Excellence of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine: provider training in cultural sensitivity
2. Public schools in the community: teach nutrition and importance of exercise
3. WildMetro: outdoor physical activities that connect patients to nature in local parks
4. Bronx Health Force: develop peer support program

**COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:**

Reaching out to the community is vital to the success of our efforts; therefore a communications plan is of utmost importance. Publicity of our award would occur via several venues: Aetna would be listed as a sponsor on the "traveling" obesity van; local Bronx and neighborhood newspaper ads listing our workshops and classes would name Aetna as a sponsor; the newsletters and web page of the North Bronx Healthcare Network and the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation would list all activities associated with the Aetna grant; community public schools would publicize our events via their PTA newsletters and communications to parents and acknowledge Aetna's support; we would attend meetings of the local community board and place all activities on their calendar; all brochures and flyers developed by our program would acknowledge the support of the Aetna Foundation; weekly weightloss "column" in the local newspaper would reinforce our message and advertise our activities.

**INVOLVING AETNA EMPLOYEES:**

Aetna employees will be welcomed onto the advisory committee which will monitor grant activities; Aetna employees will be invited to participate in weight loss efforts - to volunteer in our programs or to lose weight themselves; Aetna employees will be invited to attend media events advertising our program to the community.

**HISTORICAL INVOLVEMENT WITH AETNA:**

NBHN and HHC have a longstanding relationship with Aetna. Aetna health insurance is offered to HHC's more than 25,000 employees. NBHN (Jacobi Medical Center & North Central Bronx Hospital) is negotiating a Participating Provider Agreement with Aetna.

**EVALUATION PLAN:**

Milestones of the program will be monitored: number of participants in classes & workshops, hours in community outreach efforts, number of visitors to obesity van, number of providers attending workshops on communication & cultural diversity. Outcomes will be measured by number & percentage of patients that achieve & sustain weight loss.