

Health Behaviors of Low-income Older Adults in Asheville

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The Aging Well Curriculum is in the pilot stage of development. It is essential to first assess the initial health behaviors of the participants when designing a successful health education curriculum for lower income adults. The 23-question health survey asked participants to respond to various questions related to personal health behaviors. The questions were formulated based on selecting several key health behaviors in the content areas of emotional, physical, nutritional, and social health of older adults. Participants responded to each question with “Never, Sometimes, Most of the time, or Always” to assess the frequency of their particular health behaviors. The survey included demographic information on age, gender, living arrangement and income for each participant, which will provide insight as to any income or gender-based trends in health behaviors both before and after the curriculum is implemented. The initial health survey showed evidence of a lack of proper nutrition and exercise; 62.5% of participants did not consume the same number of calories they expend. In assessing the physical dimension of health, 85.7% of participants were unsatisfied with the current condition of their body. Participants showed positive attitudes toward social behaviors, with 100% of the older adults answering “Most of the Time” in regards to whether they feel they can effectively listen and communicate with others. The survey shows a significant need for future health education curricula, with emphasis on the physical and nutritional dimensions of health. A post-test will analyze behavioral changes that occurred due to completion of this health education curriculum, and provide insight as to the effectiveness of implementing future programs for improved health among low-income older adults.