HOW TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY BASED HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM?

EXPERIENCES FROM SWITZERLAND

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Background:
The steadily aging population and the rising health care costs demand interventions aiming at maintaining the independence of elderly people for as long as possible. Health promotion programs are a possibility to contribute to this issue. Therefore we adapted the programs "Lifestyle Matters" (Craig et al., 2007) and the German “Tatkraft” to Swiss rural conditions.

Method:
A needs assessment was conducted by questionnaire with existing patients of the health centre, which will offer the program (N=2,000). 265 questionnaires were received back.

Results:
The needs assessment revealed that 43.4% were interested in participating in the program. Relevant contents were: exercise (21%), nutrition (18%), memory training (14%), new technologies (11%), balance training (6%) and social relations (6%). Based on these results we decided to develop the program and to implement it the first time at the beginning of 2015. However, not enough people signed up for the program so the first implementation was cancelled.

Conclusion:
Results of needs assessments may not be sufficient for identifying the interest in a target group. Conventional recruitment strategies, such as flyers or newspaper articles are not adequate for recruiting participants for health promotion programs. We will conduct a focus group discussion with representatives of the target group to obtain ideas for better recruitment strategies.

Application to Practice:
Occupational therapists are interested in becoming involved in health promotion. Recruitment of self-paying participants needs careful consideration.

References


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