Impact Evaluation of the Physical Activity Programs offered by the Pike Market Senior Center

Christine Dostal, BSN, MN, MPH

Committee: Noel Chrisman, Ph.D., MPH, and Carolyn June Strickland Ph.D., RN, CHES
de Tornyay Center for Healthy Aging

There are many benefits of exercise for older adults including health promotion and disease management. Despite the importance of exercise, older adults continue to be the least active age group in the United States. For low income seniors the risk of disease is increased and access to exercise programs is limited. The Pike Market Senior Center (PMSC) has implemented two exercise classes, Stay Active and Independent for life (SAIL) and yoga, available to all PMSC members at no cost.

**Background**

- Senior Centers are beacons to aging communities
- SAIL: strength, balance and fitness program designed by the Washington State Department of Health
- Yoga: meditation, physical postures, and breathing exercises designed to promote mental, physical, and spiritual well-being
- The PMSC objectives for classes: physical, social, intellectual benefits; cultural and spiritual development
- The Successful Aging Model was the framework for this study

**Pike Market Senior Center**

- In 2014 PMSC served a total of 1525 members
- 50% of the PMSC members are homeless
- 87% report very low or low income

**Methods**

- Direct Observation
  - 10 SAIL
  - 10 Yoga

- Semi Structured Interview
  - 9 one-on-one
  - 1 group of 2
  - 1 group of 4

**Findings**

**Fidelity and DOH Guidelines**

- Leg and hand weights are used in SAIL
- The instructor has SAIL training
- Classes are vigorous activity for this group
  - SAIL- 150 min. per week, 50 min./class
  - Yoga- 180 min. per week, 60 min./class

**Objectives/Successful Aging**

- Physical improvements or maintenance was reported by all participants
- SAIL and/or yoga minimized the risk of disease/disability for those experiencing chronic health conditions
- Continued engagement in life was accomplished through socializing and attending classes regularly
- Intellectual/cognitive - limited response
- 3 subjects reported learning from other cultures as a result of the classes
- Spiritual growth was reported in the form of meditation and mindfulness

**Discussion**

- Through analysis, the relationship between the Objectives and Successful Aging Model emerged

**Recommendations**

- Design the exercise space to be more welcoming and safe
- Provide exercise instructions for a variety of fitness levels
- Expand the SAIL class to one hour

**QUOTE:** I spent a lot of years doing nonphysical work and you kind of forget how it feels to really be in shape[Yoga] helps me sleep better which is another piece for dealing with my depression; it makes me calmer and my coordination is much better. Just, you know, a bunch of small benefits but it’s all a result of yoga.

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