



# Improvement Through Self-Management: Establishing Healthy Heart Ambassador

# Quality Insights Overview

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- Non-profit organization focused on data driven community solutions to improve health care quality in pursuit of better care, smarter spending and healthier people.
- Change agent, trusted partner and integrator of organizations collaborating to improve care.

# Disclosures

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- In order to obtain contact hours you must:
  - Watch the 60-minute webinar (live or recorded).
  - Complete evaluation & post-knowledge check.
- Continuing Education
  - In support of improving patient care, this activity has been planned and implemented by Quality Insights and CAMC Institute for Academic Medicine. CAMC Institute for Academic Medicine is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the health care team.
    - Physicians: The CAMC Institute for Academic Medicine designates this live activity for a maximum of 1 hour of AMA PRA Category I Credit(s)<sup>™</sup>. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.
    - Nurses: The CAMC Institute for Academic Medicine is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. This offering has been approved for 1 contact hour.

# Disclosures (cont.)

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- Panelists and planners for this educational activity have NO relevant financial relationships with illegible companies to disclose.
- The expiration for this enduring material is:  
**May 23, 2025.**



# Host: Courtney Masterson, MHA, RDN/LDN

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- Practice Transformation Specialist with Quality Insights
- Masters in Healthcare Administration
- Registered Dietitian



# Learning Outcomes

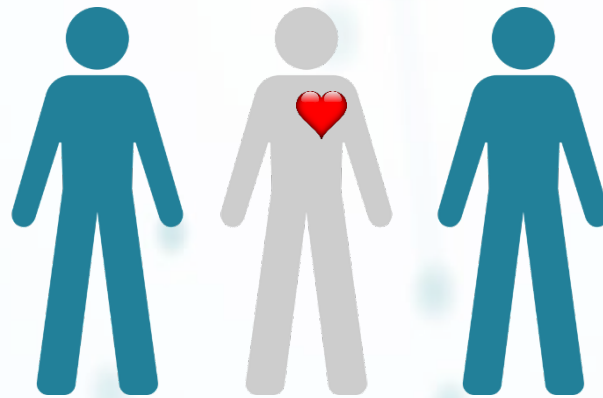
## After this course, the learner will:

- Identify two potential benefits to establishing a Health Heart Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring (HHA BPSM) program within their state.
- Describe the steps of establishing a HHA BPSM program.
- Identify two potential barriers to starting a HHA BPSM program.

# Hypertension Incidence in Delaware

Delaware Diabetes and Heart Disease Prevention and Control Program  
**Healthy Heart Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program**

**In 2019, approximately 281,000 adult Delawareans reported having hypertension (36.4% of the adult population).**



Source: [DHSS](#), 2019.

# Call to Action to Control Hypertension



From [Partner Toolkit](#), by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022.



# Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

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# Self-Measured Blood Pressure

- Self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) is the process of an individual measuring their own blood pressure in an at home setting.
- In 2020, the American Heart Association (AHA) and the American Medical Association (AMA) put out a joint statement promoting the use of SMBP.
- According to this statement, valid uses of SMBP are to identify:
  - White-coat hypertension
  - Masked hypertension
  - Masked uncontrolled hypertension

Source: [AHA](#), 2020.



# White Coat Hypertension

- Scientific studies show that some people have elevated blood pressure readings in the office, but their blood pressure measures at normal levels when taken at home.

Source: [Cleveland Clinic](#), 2022.



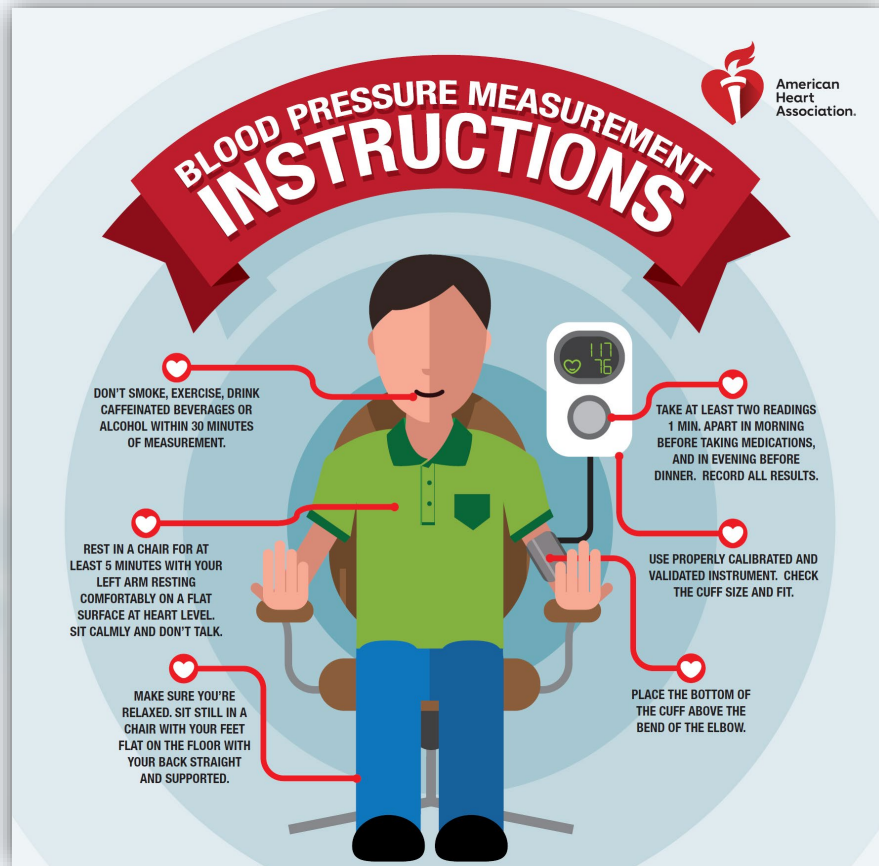
# Masked Hypertension



- Conversely, other people may have undiagnosed hypertension.
  - They may have slightly elevated BP in the provider's office and the provider wants to track it over time to see if the patient really has hypertension.
  - Or they may have normal readings in the office, but an elevated BP when taken elsewhere.
- Either way, it is important to know what the person's BP really is, so the health care team can determine the best treatment plan.

Source: [Cleveland Clinic](#), 2022.

# Tips for Taking Home Blood Pressure



Source: [AHA](#), 2018



Source: [AHA](#), 2018

# HHA BPSM Program

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- No cost
- CDC and Y-USA collaborative program
- Empowers adults with high blood pressure to take control of their blood pressure
- Focuses on management of high blood pressure through regular self-monitoring and heart-healthy lifestyles



# Guest Speaker: Natalie Andrews

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- Trainer/Educator III, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health
- Runs the HHA BPSM program



# Delaware Healthy Heart Ambassador – Blood Pressure Self- Monitoring Program (HHA BPSM)

*A LOW-PRESSURE APPROACH TO  
CONTROLLING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE*





# HHA BPSM Program Burdens in Delaware

- **36.4% (281,000) age 18 or older reported having hypertension**
- **42.1% of African Americans reported having hypertension**
- **91.8% of those age 65 and older who report having hypertension are currently taking medication**
- **50.1% of obese adults have hypertension**
- **61.2% of older adults who are age 65 or older have hypertension**
- **44.4% of adults earning less than \$15,000 annually say they have high blood pressure**

# Healthy Heart Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program Overview

- A low-pressure approach to controlling high blood pressure.
- This is a free program, that can be 100%-virtual or hybrid, that focuses on self-monitoring of your blood pressure with individualized support, and teaches lifestyle techniques through nutrition education and cooking classes.
- During the four-month program, you will learn how to be healthy and stay that way.

# Serving Those Who Need The Program The Most

- As you consider launching the program, it's important to look at the prevalence of hypertension in your community.
- How will you ensure you're reaching populations most in need of the program?
  - Look beyond your organization's current reach.
  - Understand the needs of the communities you wish to serve.
  - Partner with health care providers who can refer their patients.
  - Partner with other community organizations that can refer participants or serve as program sites.

# Program Outcomes

- Reduction in participant's blood pressure
- Improve blood pressure measurements with a validated monitor
- Increase awareness of triggers that elevate blood pressure
- Enhance knowledge to develop healthier eating habits
- Ability to reach priority populations in rural areas with only a small amount of resources
- Healthier eating and lifestyle habits

# Patient Successes

"I met my coach via Zoom and found her to be friendly and very relatable. I faithfully took my blood pressure twice a day, and a month later lo and behold, my blood pressure started to go down. Taking the time out for myself helped lower my blood pressure, and DE now it is mostly in the normal range." - *Hiromi, Wilmington, DE*

"The live nutrition classes taught me little tweaks like substituting pearl barley for rice. All these foods were vaguely familiar to me, but now I learned how to use them to design my meals. All of this and being able to monitor my own blood pressure has empowered me to exercise control over my overall health." - *Linda, Newark, DE*

# Qualifications to Enter the Program

- **Age 18 or older**
- **High blood pressure diagnosis by a health care provider**
- **Taking prescription medication to control or manage high blood pressure**
- **Do not have an irregular heartbeat (atrial fibrillation or other arrhythmias)**
- **Do not have swelling in the limbs due to abnormal buildup of fluids (often caused by cancer treatments that remove or damage your lymph nodes)**
- **Have not experienced a cardiac event in the last 12 months, such as a heart attack or stroke**

# Delaware's Participant Opportunities and Incentives

- Get a free validated blood pressure monitor to measure and record their blood pressure at least twice per month.
- Attend two personalized 10- to 15-minute virtual consultations per month.
- Attend monthly 60-minute virtual Nutrition Education seminars.
- Attend monthly 60-minute virtual Simple Cooking with Heart cooking classes.
- Receive a validated Healthy Heart graduation kit after completion of 4-month program.

# Participant Enrollment Process

**1.** Set up space and prepare for a conversation

**2.** Discuss the program, its value, and requirements

**3.** Check participants eligibility

**4.** Assess participant readiness

**5.** Discuss and collect program fees, offer financial assistance

**6.** Complete enrollment paperwork

**7.** Teach proper technique for measuring blood pressure

**8.** Take and record participant's blood pressure

**9.** Model the proper technique for measuring blood pressure

**10.** Help participants determine how they will track

**11.** Provide a schedule of office hours and Nutrition Education Seminars





# Participant Self-Monitoring, Tracking and Weekly Support

- Take blood pressure readings at home at least twice a month or at whatever interval their health care provider suggests.
  - Choose a tracking tool they find easy and convenient.
  - Journal
  - Online tool
  - Smartphone app
  - Paper and pencil

During enrollment, Program Facilitators should determine how the participant would like to receive messages:

- Phone
- Email
- Text

# Where Can The Program Be Delivered?

- The four-month program can be delivered in-person, on-demand or virtually.
- Nutrition Education Seminars should allow for a group of participants either virtually or in-person, a space to project a PowerPoint presentation, and blood pressure monitors to allow participants to practice measuring their blood pressure and receive coaching from a Program Facilitator.
- Due to Covid, Delaware moved the Office Hour Session, Simple Cooking with Heart demonstrations and Nutrition Education to virtual meetings. We have started with in-person cooking demonstrations in each county.

# Office Hour Consultations

- These are periods during which Program Facilitators are present and available to meet with a participant for 15-30 minutes consultations at a program site or remotely.
- Participants will be expected to attend at least two Office Hour consultations every other week during the four months. During these consultations, Program Facilitators:
  - Build trusting relationships with participants.
  - Encourage participants with self-monitoring habit.
  - View participants' blood pressure readings at home.
- Program facilitators should encourage participants to share their tracked blood pressure readings with their health care provider and should be prepared to follow proper medical emergency procedures if a participant has a blood pressure reading that requires emergency care.

# Nutrition Education Seminars

- There are four seminars with PowerPoint slides and materials.
- One seminar must be delivered monthly.
- Seminars are facilitated by a Program Facilitator
- Seminars are 60 minutes
- The Nutrition Education Seminar topics are:
  - The DASH approach to healthier eating, DASH is an acronym for Dietary Approaches to Stopping Hypertension
  - Reducing Sodium Intake
  - Shopping, Cooking and Food Preparation
  - Eating for Your Heart

# Considerations for Participant Recruitment and Community Partnerships

- Who in your community already works on hypertension/blood pressure reduction and how will your efforts be viewed?
- What stakeholders within the community need to be engaged?
- How will you garner support for your efforts to launch the Healthy Heart Ambassador Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program?

**REMEMBER:** Relationship building among stakeholders takes time, start now.

# Volunteer Program Facilitator Qualifications

- Interested in chronic disease prevention/management and able to provide on-going support to participants.
- Ability to maintain a consistently positive, patient, and non-judgmental attitude.
- Effective at relationship-building, coaching, engagement, motivating others, facilitating and encouraging participants to measure their blood pressure at home.
- Understanding of/willingness to maintain fidelity to the program model.
- Understanding of/willingness to collect program data.
- HHA BPSM volunteers can be Nurses, Doctors, College Students, Community Health Workers, Retired Persons, and Pharmacists, anyone is able to be a program facilitator.

# Volunteer Program Facilitator Challenges

- **Volunteer retention and finding additional funding to support stipends**
- **Constant need for Volunteer Program Facilitators to address populations that do not speak English.**
- **Not enough trained Volunteer Program Facilitators throughout the length of the program.**
- **Volunteer Program Facilitators access and training for HIPPA compliant platforms and technology.**

# Planning for Program Implementation

- Attend the CDC's Facilitator and Master Training Series: [https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/tools\\_training.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/tools_training.htm).
- Assess your organization's ability to start and maintain the HHA BPSM program long term.
- Research HIPAA-compliant technology needed to capture data.
- Send potential Healthy Heart Ambassadors to the Healthy Heart Ambassador Certification Training.



# Site and Space Selection

- Each program location should accommodate all elements of the program, including:
  - Office Hours: Space for Program Facilitators to conduct 1:1 consultations for three to eight hours per week where private participant information will not be seen or overheard by others. A minimum of three separate office hour blocks each week at each program site is encouraged.
  - Nutrition Education Seminars: Space for Program Facilitators to facilitate a one-hour Nutrition Education Seminar each month for a group of participants.

# Considerations for Site Selection

- Assess the needs of your priority population of adults with high blood pressure, especially those who may be experiencing health disparities and inequities.
  - Determine the location convenience, accessibility, available space, days and hours of operation, safety, and security.
  - Encourage relationship building so participants may see the program as a place to build new relationships and connect with other members of the community working to make a similar lifestyle change.
  - Create a safe, enjoyable, and inclusive environment for participants while ensuring privacy and confidentiality of the information discussed with each participant during Office Hours.

**REMEMBER:** If you'll be holding the program at community partner locations, consider securing space three to six months prior to delivering the program to ensure a solid relationship and understanding is in place.

# Scheduling

- **Dates, times and locations should be finalized at least a few months in advance so that written Office Hour and Seminar schedules can be provided to participants at the time of enrollment.**
- **Consider the following when developing schedules:**
  - **Office Hours: At least three-to-eight Office Hours staffed by a Program Facilitator should be available at each program site every week.**
  - **Ensure that Office Hours take place on days and at times that will be convenient for that program site's participants.**
  - **Nutrition Education Seminars: One of the four 60-minute Nutrition Education Seminars should be delivered at each program site every month.**
  - **Consider staggering the days, times, and topics of the seminars across your program sites so that participants will have a variety of options for attending a seminar each month.**

# Staffing

- Consider how your organization will provide support for the following roles:
  - Leadership
  - Program Coordinator
  - Program Facilitator
- When thinking through your staffing model, you'll want to think about how your organization's leadership will support the program.
- Also think about who would serve as your Program Manager and Program Facilitators.

# Supplies

- Validated blood pressure monitors for Program Facilitators and participants. Visit: [www.validatebp.org](http://www.validatebp.org) for a list of validated cuffs.
- Validated blood pressure monitors that are automatically inflatable, battery-operated, portable and lightweight, and adjustable for cuff size.
- Audio/Visual
  - Computer
  - Projector
  - Virtual meeting platforms
  - If your organization intends to deliver the program remotely, you may want to think about what additional types of supplies might be needed to help your Program Facilitators engage with participants.
- Handouts
  - Tips for proper blood pressure measurement
  - Pocket BP tracker
  - Tools to support Program Facilitators might include participant readiness assessments; a checklist for setting up Office Hours; the protocol for Office Hours; an Office Hour tracking log; and sample language for support emails and texts.

# Budgeting

- **Main areas of program expenses:**
  - Staffing (Program Coordinator, Program Facilitators, etc.)
  - Training - cost of training
  - Technology – data entry and Wi-Fi needs
  - Supplies – cuffs, lockbox for storage
  - Program promotion – brochures, fliers, program materials, etc.
- **Organizational plan for monitoring operational costs for a successful BPSM program and to create a plan that evolves over time to foster growth.**
- **The financial plan your organization develops for this program can help guide decision-making from the start and ensure that your program staff, leadership, partners, and community members share realistic expectations and goals around the financial health and capacity of the program.**

# Program Challenges

- Engaging with Managed Health Care Organizations and other potential payers to make the program sustainable over the long term.
- Ability to reach priority populations in rural areas with only a small amount of resources.
- Assess your participants for readiness such as internet, computer access, email access, and camera accessibility.
- Defined crisis response to participants' extreme high or low readings.
- Inclusiveness for people with disabilities in the age of COVID.
- Identify resources for validated blood pressure monitors and cuffs in different sizes.

# Tips for Success

- Identify strong partners for referring participants
- Having Program Facilitators that are bilingual
- Start slow and add your progression for gradual growth.
- Be prepared for both in-person and virtual learning opportunities
- Identify ways to keep your participants engaged in the program
- Multi-directional referrals from community- and clinical-based organizations for participants.
- Additional information can be found at: <https://ncoa.org/article/how-to-build-referral-systems-for-community-integrated-health-networks>



# Opportunities for Improvement

- **Stipends for Healthily Heart Ambassador Facilitators**
- **Better advertising**
- **Retention strategies for the participants to complete all four months of the program**
- **Utilizing bidirectional referral of participants**



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# Questions

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# Quality Insights on the Web

- For more information on Quality Insights, visit our website at: <https://www.qualityinsights.org/stateservices/projects/de-1815>
- Connect with Quality Insights on social media via Twitter and LinkedIn.



[@Qual\\_Insights](https://twitter.com/Qual_Insights)



[www.linkedin.com/company/1259377](https://www.linkedin.com/company/1259377)

# Evaluation & Post-Knowledge Check

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- Empowering Your Patients to Control Diabetes Evaluation & Post-Knowledge Check:
  - Evaluation & Post-Knowledge Check:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NL78JT2>



## QR Code:

Activate the camera on your smart phone and scan this QR code to link to the **evaluation**.

# THANK YOU!



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