Salt Reduction Strategy for Tobago

“Salt Smart Tobago”

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Project Background

• Hypertension is a major risk factor for death, and the second cause for morbidity due to strokes and heart disease.¹ ²

• Worldwide, it affects 25% of adults.³ Similarly, 26% of adults in Trinidad and Tobago are estimated to have this disease. ⁴

• The overconsumption of salt is the main contributor to the high global and local prevalence of hypertension. Therefore, salt reduction is the most cost-effective public health measure for decreasing morbidity and mortality from hypertension.⁵

• Currently, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) recommends a daily salt intake of less than 5 grams per person per day.⁶ Based on this guideline, the Office of the County Medical Officer of Health (O-CMOH) of the Division of Health and Social Services (DHSS) wants Tobago to reach this goal by 2020.

Objectives

• To adopt the PAHO recommendation of less than 5 grams of salt consumption per person per day by 2020 as a policy of the DHSS

• To engage Tobago towards making dietary salt consumption less than 5 grams per person per day by 2020 a reality

• To use a scale-up approach for developing and implementing “salt reduction interventions” using evidence-based best practices

• To develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework to achieve PAHO’s recommendation in Tobago

Methodology

• Study Design: Cross-sectional study

• Study Population: Patients and healthcare staff at 7 health centers; employees of 2 government offices

• Data Collection:
  • Led 15-minute lectures on “Easy Ways to Reduce Salt Intake” and “Dangers of a High Salt Diet” from June to July 2015
  • Conducted pre- and post-lesson knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) surveys of 72 individuals
  • Provided brochures and recipe cards to lesson attendees to reinforce daily salt reduction goal

Next Steps

• Synthesize findings to report to the CMOH of Tobago

• Present findings at local and international conferences

• Prepare manuscripts for publication

Project Partners

• The Office of the County Medical Officer of Health in Tobago - Dr. Vishwanath Partapsingh (Co-PI; CMOH)

• Emory University - Dr. Neil Mehta (Co-PI)

• Emory Global Health Institute

Results

Demographics of Study Survey Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Age*</td>
<td>38.2 (15.4)</td>
<td>45.3 (23.8)</td>
<td>7 (9.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Health Center</td>
<td>51 (70.8)</td>
<td>21 (29.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Offices</td>
<td>17 (23.8)</td>
<td>2 (2.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
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<td>3 (4.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Severe Day Adverse</td>
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<td>7 (9.6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>4 (5.6)</td>
<td>2 (2.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
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<td>3 (4.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
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<td>1 (1.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
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<td>1 (1.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>45 (62.1)</td>
<td>3 (4.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
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<td>4 (5.6)</td>
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<td>Divorced</td>
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<td>Separated</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Common Law</td>
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<td>6 (8.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>2 (2.7)</td>
<td>1 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Average Age is presented as the mean age for males and females with the standard deviations.

Progress to Date

• Created lesson plans, brochures, bookmarks, stickers, recipe cards, and posters

• Completed data collection and analysis

• Provided teaching assessments to the CMOH to be used to advocate for salt reduction by the Ministry of Health

References