



Bridging the Gap: Health Information Outreach Prince George's County Community

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Project funded by the National Library of Medicine

The Spring of Life Wellness Center (SOLWC) is a nonprofit community health organization founded in 1995 under the auspices of the Refreshing Spring Church of God in Christ. The center was created to expand the health promotion and disease prevention programs that were previously offered by the church's health ministry. By offering the following services, SOLWC fills a critical need for Prince George's County residents who lack health insurance or who are underinsured

- ◆ Prevention, early diagnosis, and primary care for diabetes, high blood pressure, and other common chronic diseases
- ◆ HIV/AIDS testing and education
- ◆ Breast health education, counseling, and mammogram referrals
- ◆ And more...

In 2002, the National Library of Medicine (NLM) initiated a partnership with SOLWC to provide medically underserved citizens access to up-to-date, accurate health information from NLM and other trustworthy Internet sources. Through this partnership, NLM

- ◆ Provided computers and high-speed Internet connections for SOLWC
- ◆ Presented training for SOLWC staff and volunteers on finding and using online health information resources
- ◆ Participated in the church's annual health fair exhibits

Spring of Life Wellness Health Information Center

The Spring of Life Wellness Health Information Center offers an array of health education services to Prince George's County residents including

- ◆ Health education
- ◆ One-on-one assistance
- ◆ Private workstations
- ◆ Reliable online resources
- ◆ Brochures about NLM's health information database

Health Information Classes

Participants learn about specific medical conditions and how to locate reliable health information resources, including the National (NLM's) MedlinePlus database.

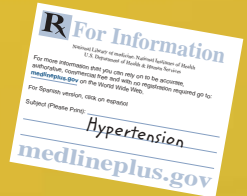
Classes address

- ◆ Hypertension
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Heart disease
- ◆ HIV/AIDS
- ◆ Nutrition/fitness
- ◆ Smoking cessation
- ◆ More...



Health Information Prescriptions

Clinicians give patients "prescriptions for information" on specific diseases or medical conditions. Patients go to the Health Information Center, where volunteers help them locate specified online information.



Scenarios

Train-the-Trainer Education

A volunteer attended a SOLWC Train-the-Trainer course taught by NLM staff. During the course, she learned how to locate reliable health information using NLM's consumer-friendly databases. As a trained volunteer, she helps community members and patients find high-quality health information using the Health Information Center's resources.



Health Education/Health Information Classes

A Prince George's County citizen attended a class on heart disease. He learned facts about heart disease and how to use NLM's MedlinePlus to locate information on the condition. He was astonished by the wealth of free information on the Web and empowered to improve his health. Using MedlinePlus, he located a support group and started to take steps to improve his heart health.



Health Information Prescriptions

A patient was diagnosed with uterine fibroids. The clinician filled out a "health information prescription" form and referred her to the Wellness Health Information Center. A volunteer helped her locate information about fibroids using MedlinePlus. After the patient learned about the treatment options, she discussed the options with her health care provider. Together they developed a treatment plan that would work for her.

