



Muslim Association of Greater Rockford

**Health Promotion
and Disease
Prevention Program
At
Places of Worship**

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Background

It has long been understood in public health that the way to solve health-related problems and improve the health of a community is to empower the people of that community. Improving the health of a community involves activating local organizations, groups, and individuals to cause changes in behavior or in rules or policies that influence health. Traditionally, empowering people has involved mobilizing schools, government agencies, health care professionals, and health-related organizations in communities. Faith-based organizations have often been left out of this process. Reasons for this omission range from the need for separation of church and state to the belief that religion and spirituality are not connected to health etc.

A faith-based organization may be defined as a group of individuals united on the basis of religious or spiritual beliefs or faith. Traditionally, faith-based organizations have directed their efforts toward meeting the spiritual, social, and cultural needs of their members. However, when ministries promote physical and mental well-being, when they discourage illegal or reckless behavior, and when they advocate ethical conduct, they are also indirectly promoting members' health.

The social change often begins in faith-based organizations, the health promotion and preventive programs need to make it possible for the community to support healthy behaviors but unfortunately health is the most neglected of all program run at the places of worship. The research has suggested that various measures to improve the health through prevention, health promotion and education programs can be delivered to the community through Places of Worship. Churches are well-accepted sites for cancer screening, blood pressure monitoring, weight loss programs, cholesterol education, smoking cessation, diabetes education, stroke prevention, physical activity, and nutrition education etc.

The faith-based organizations are stable, enduring, and often the most trusted institutions in the community. They can be identified with almost every cultural and ethnic group and frequently serve as a point where large numbers of people regularly congregate. Statistics shows that 96% of Americans profess to believe in God, >90% pray, nearly 70% are members of churches, synagogues or mosques, and over 40% will have attended a house of worship in any given week.

The faith-based organizations are essential in achieving the public health goals for healthier communities because people often turn to their faiths for strength in times of illness and stress. The American Public Health Association encourages health and faith partnerships that promote positive health behaviors among members of their congregations. Further, the religious and spiritual connection with positive health behaviors make faith-based organizations natural partners for planning and implementing health initiatives to improve the health of the community.

Proposal

1. The Places of Worship have web-site; there shall be a **health information** section with basic health promotion and prevention information. Link to governmental and authentic website for the community to get the health information, current public health issues, local area hospital, department of public health etc.
2. . To send health information on regular basis to the community members via e-mail, this should not be more than a computer screen or a page on various public health issues/topics, for example reminder for early flu vaccination, various screening test etc.
3. With the help of the health professionals in the community shall organize one presentation every month on public health issue, organize health fair once a year

God is the power and the energy behind all transformational change and that includes making the lifestyle choices necessary to become healthy. It is through God's power that we make change, gaining strength from being rooted and grounded in His love.

Preventive Screening

Breast Cancer

Breast cancer affects one in eight women during their lives. Breast cancer kills more women in the United States than any cancer except lung cancer. No one knows why some women get breast cancer, but there are a number of risk factors. Risks that you cannot change include

Age - the chance of getting breast cancer rises as a woman gets older

Genes - there are two genes, BRCA1 and BRCA2 that greatly increase the risk. Women who have family members with breast or ovarian cancer may wish to be tested.

Personal factors - beginning periods before age 12 or going through menopause after age 55

Other risks include being overweight, using hormone replacement therapy (also called menopausal hormone therapy), taking birth control pills, drinking alcohol, not having children or having your first child after age 35 or having dense breasts.

Symptoms of breast cancer may include a lump in the breast, a change in size or shape of the breast or discharge from a nipple. Breast self-exam and mammography can help find breast cancer early when it is most treatable. Treatment may consist of radiation, lumpectomy, mastectomy, and chemotherapy and hormone therapy.

Men can have breast cancer, too, but the number of cases is small.

NIH: National Cancer Institute

Cervical Cancer

The cervix is the lower part of the uterus, the place where a baby grows during pregnancy. Cervical cancer is caused by a virus called HPV. The virus spreads through sexual contact. Most women's bodies are able to fight HPV infection. But sometimes the virus leads to cancer. You're at higher risk if you smoke, have many children, use birth control pills for a long time, or have HIV infection.

Cervical cancer may not cause any symptoms at first. Later, you may have pelvic pain or bleeding from the vagina. It usually takes several years for normal cells in the cervix to turn into cancer cells. Your health care provider can find abnormal cells by doing a Pap test - examining cells from the cervix under a microscope. If there are abnormal cells, you will need a biopsy. By getting regular Pap tests and pelvic exams you can find and treat any problems before they turn into cancer.

Treatment may include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, or a combination. The choice of treatment depends on the size of the tumor, whether the cancer has spread and whether you would like to become pregnant someday.

Vaccines can protect against several types of HPV, including some that can cause cancer.

Colon-Rectal Cancer

The colon and rectum are part of the large intestine. Colorectal cancer occurs when tumors form in the lining of the large intestine. It is common in both men and women. The risk of developing colorectal cancer rises after age 50. You're also more likely to get it if you have colorectal Polyps, a family history of colorectal cancer, ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease, eat a diet high in fat, or smoke.

Symptoms of colorectal cancer include

Diarrhea or constipation

A feeling that your bowel does not empty completely

Blood (either bright red or very dark) in your stool

Stools that are narrower than usual

Frequent gas pains or cramps, or feeling full or bloated

Weight loss with no known reason

Fatigue

Nausea or vomiting

Because you may not have symptoms at first, it's important to have screening tests. Everyone over 50 should get screened. Tests include colonoscopy and tests for blood in the stool. Treatments for colorectal cancer include surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, or a combination. Surgery can usually cure it when it is found early.

Diabetes

Diabetes is a disease in which your blood glucose, or sugar, levels are too high. Glucose comes from the foods you eat. Insulin is a hormone that helps the glucose get into your cells to give them energy. With type 1 diabetes, your body does not make insulin. With type 2 diabetes, the more common type, your body does not make or use insulin well. Without enough insulin, the glucose stays in your blood.

Over time, having too much glucose in your blood can cause serious problems. It can damage your eyes, kidneys, and nerves. Diabetes can also cause heart disease, stroke and even the need to remove a limb. Pregnant women can also get diabetes, called gestational diabetes.

A blood test can show if you have diabetes. Exercise, weight control and sticking to your meal plan can help control your diabetes. You should also monitor your glucose level and take medicine if prescribed.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

High Blood Pressure

Blood pressure is the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Each time your heart beats, it pumps out blood into the arteries. Your blood pressure is highest when your heart beats, pumping the blood. This is called systolic pressure. When your heart is at rest, between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is the diastolic pressure.

Your blood pressure reading uses these two numbers, the systolic and diastolic pressures. Usually they are written one above or before the other. A reading of

119/79 or lower is normal blood pressure

140/90 or higher is high blood pressure

Between 120 and 139 for the top number, or between 80 and 89 for the bottom number is prehypertension

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms, but it can cause serious problems such as stroke, heart failure, heart attack and kidney failure. You can control high blood pressure through healthy lifestyle habits and taking medicines, if needed.

NIH: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that occurs naturally in all parts of the body. Your body needs some cholesterol to work properly. But if you have too much in your blood, it can combine with other substances in the blood and stick to the walls of your arteries. This is called plaque. Plaque can narrow your arteries or even block them.

High levels of cholesterol in the blood can increase your risk of heart disease. Your cholesterol levels tend to rise as you get older. There are usually no signs or symptoms that you have high blood cholesterol, but it can be detected with a blood test. You are likely to have high cholesterol if members of your family have it, if you are overweight or if you eat a lot of fatty foods.

You can lower your cholesterol by exercising more and eating more fruits and vegetables. You also may need to take medicine to lower your cholesterol.

NIH: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis makes your bones weak and more likely to break. Anyone can develop osteoporosis, but it is common in older women. As many as half of all women and a quarter of men older than 50 will break a bone due to osteoporosis.

Risk factors include

Getting older

Being small and thin

Having a family history of osteoporosis taking

certain medicines

Being a white or Asian woman

Having osteopenia, which is low bone density

Osteoporosis is a silent disease. You might not know you have it until you break a bone. A bone mineral density test is the best way to check your bone health. To keep bones strong, eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D, exercise and do not smoke. If needed, medicines can also help.

NIH: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases

Obesity

Obesity means having too much body fat. It is different from being overweight, which means weighing too much. The weight may come from muscle, bone, fat, and/or body water. Both terms mean that a person's weight is greater than what's considered healthy for his or her height.

Obesity occurs over time when you eat more calories than you use. The balance between calories-in and calories-out differs for each person. Factors that might affect your weight include your genetic makeup, overeating, eating high-fat foods, and not being physically active.

Being obese increases your risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, and some cancers. If you are obese, losing even 5 to 10 percent of your weight can delay or prevent some of these diseases. For example, that means losing 10 to 20 pounds if you weigh 200 pounds.

NIH: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases