

Call 1-888-854-7244 for more information or to register



Living a Healthy Life: Program News

Spring 2011

Living a Healthy Life (LHL) is a self-management program offered through the Sport, Recreation and Healthy Living Division of the Prince Edward Island Department of Health and Wellness. This highly-interactive, peer-led education program aims to help people better manage their chronic conditions.

Topics covered include physical activity, healthy eating, better breathing, communication, working with health providers, understanding emotions, managing pain, coping with fatigue, and planning for the future. There is a strong emphasis on goal setting and problem solving.

Living a Healthy Life is open to everyone: people with any type of chronic condition, their loved ones and caregivers, as well as anyone ready to make a lifestyle change to improve their health.



Health and Wellness

Pictured from left: Peer Leader Freda Richard, Davida Stewart (participant), Minister of Health and Wellness Carolyn Bertram and Thelma Seaman (participant).





“Really appreciated the program. Having a group atmosphere was invaluable to the experience as one didn’t feel so alone.”

participant

The Stanford Model

Living a Healthy Life is based on the Self-Management program model created by the Patient Education Research Center at Stanford University. Research indicates that those who participated in the program had improved healthful behaviours and overall health status. They also reported decreased days spent in the hospital.

There are different types of self-management programs. On PEI there is the chronic disease self-management (offered through the Sport, Recreation and Healthy Living Division, Department of Health and Wellness) and the Arthritis Self-Management (offered through the Arthritis Society).

The Stanford-model self-management programs are offered around the world using different names, but they are the exact same program. Nova Scotia’s chronic disease self-management program is called *Your Way to Wellness*, while New Brunswick offers *My Choices, My Health*. Mutual support and success of group members are part of the many reasons this program is so successful.

LHL Quick Facts:



- 5 pilots were offered in 2008/09
- 8 programs in 2009/10
- 15 programs in 2010/11
- 330 participants from 28 programs in 15 communities
- Typical program has 10-12 participants with a 74% retention
- Maximum class size is 18 participants
- Most common conditions among participants are arthritis, hypertension, diabetes, asthma, cancer, and heart disease. People with any type of chronic condition are welcome.



“Had it not been for this program, I would have never walked. I do not like walking but do it for my health. In 6 weeks, I’ve walked 90 miles.” participant



“I found making a weekly action plan to be of great benefit. Focus on short term goals so as not become frustrated. It was great to be with other people who have chronic conditions and hear how they cope.” participant

Peer Leaders

with Self-Management Programs T-Trainer, Karen Hannah



Back row (left to right): Laraine Poole, Mary Gemmell, Kathleen Brennan, Colette Arsenault, Kay Wall, Cheryl Banks, Shaun Younker, Nancy Malcolm-Sharratt, Fairley Yeo, Joanne Paquet. Sitting: Roma Downe-MacQuarrie, Mary Acom, Karen Hannah

Peer Leader Refresher Day

Each Living a Healthy Life program is facilitated by two peer leaders. Karen Hannah, who oversees the self-management programs in the Vancouver Coastal Health Region through the University of Victoria in Ladner, British Columbia, was on hand to lead the most recent peer leader refresher day. The University of Victoria oversees all Master Trainers training in Canada on behalf of Stanford.

To become a peer leader people must attend a 3-day training session delivered by Master Trainers. Peer leaders must offer one program per year. Peer leader refresher sessions are held once or twice a year. These are important opportunities to connect volunteers from across the island with each other and come together to problem solve, debrief and discuss opportunities for program growth. Presently, there are 27 peer leaders with the LHL Program; almost $\frac{2}{3}$ are volunteers. For information on peer leadership, contact Mary at 902 368-6523 or mracom@gov.pe.ca.

The Basics:



- \$10 registration fee
- Groups meet once a week for 2½ hours for 6 consecutive weeks
- Program available in English or French
- Participants receive a free copy of the book *Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions*, developed by Stanford. It provides plain language information about how to manage health
- Register by calling 1-888-854-7244 (toll free)

“I have never felt the level of support I did in this small group. We laughed, we cried, we supported, we shared and encouraged each other in an open and very un-threatening way.”

participant

“A great course! The book is very informative with lots of information covering many subjects. Great leaders, and lots of laughs!”

participant



330 participants from 28 programs in 15 communities:



Program locations



We are always on the lookout for host locations that offer:

- wheelchair accessibility
- parking
- easy access to a private room
- limited set-up (boardroom style)
- free access
- access to kitchen facilities is a bonus

Let us know if you have a potential host location by contacting Mary at 368-6523 or mracorn@gov.pe.ca

For more information - brochures, posters, mailing list, presentations, register for an upcoming program - call **1-888-854-7244** or go online www.peihealthyliving.ca



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