P74 (continued)

Outcome Measures and Analysis: The total expenditure on item level SSB purchases within the year 2011. A descriptive analysis (counts, frequencies) was conducted. The data was limited to descriptive analysis due to data limitations.

Results: SSB purchases differed between SNAP households and non-SNAP households. Non-SNAP households had a larger expenditure on SSBs than SNAP households. However, SSB constituted a somewhat larger percentage of total expenditures for SNAP households than non-SNAP households. For SNAP households, SSB items made up the majority of the top ten beverage purchases.

Conclusion and Implications: SSB consumption remains problematic in the U.S. and policies and education should be focused on reducing SSB consumption regardless of SNAP status. Rather than pointing to low-income households making poor choices, future research should investigate access to and availability of healthy food options in terms of distance to supermarkets and price and selection of available foods (corner stores).

Funding: None

P75 Assessment of PSE Strategies in Arkansas SNAP-Ed Leads to Development of a Toolkit on PSE Implementation for Local Staff

Brenda Wolford, MS, RD, brenda.wolford@altarum.org, Altarum Institute, 4 Milk Street, 3rd Floor, Portland, ME 4101; Brent Walker, MS, RD, Altarum Institute; Rosemary Rodibaugh, PhD, RD, LD, University of Arkansas; Sarah David, MBA, MM; Amy McClelland, RD, MS; Katie Holland, MS, RD

Objective: To develop a comprehensive Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) change implementation toolkit and training after evaluating existing PSE strategies in Arkansas, the capacity of Family Consumer Science (FCS) agents to conduct PSE activities within their counties, and the training needs of local staff.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale: USDA's Food and Nutrition Service stipulates that SNAP-Ed nutrition education classes must be delivered alongside comprehensive, multilevel interventions or community and public health approaches to improve nutrition. All states are required to deliver PSE strategies through multilevel or public health approaches to SNAP-Ed.

Description: The University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Services (UACES) delivers nutrition education and physical activity promotion in 75 counties through SNAP-Ed. UACES contracted with Altarum Institute to help strengthen its approach to implementing and evaluating SNAP-Ed PSE approaches.

Evaluation: FCS agents participated in a survey and key informant interviews. A toolkit and training on PSE imple-

mentation were developed based on findings from the survey and interviews.

Conclusions and Implications: The delivery of PSE strategies was already underway in many counties and the need for more training and support was identified. While agents had limited time to spend on SNAP-Ed PSE strategies, they realized the importance of partnerships and coordinated efforts to stretch their resources. Agents had a positive outlook on planning and implementing future PSE activities. A step-by-step toolkit was developed to assist agents with assessing, planning, monitoring and evaluating PSE strategies in their counties. A subsequent training on the toolkit was provided to agents by Altarum Institute with the goal of increasing their self-efficacy.

Funding: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Education

P76 Barriers to Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in the WIC Program: Counselor vs. Client Perceptions in a Midwestern City

Katy Anderson, BS, Oklahoma State University; Stan Kogan, MPH, skogan@siouxfalls.org, South Dakota State University, 521 North Main Avenue, #101, Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Objective: To compare WIC counselors' perceptions to their clients' self-reported barriers to fruit and vegetable consumption and cash value voucher (CVV) use in the Sioux Falls area.

Study Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention: Surveys were designed and validated with WIC and administered at the local WIC office. Surveys with clients were completed as interviews.

Outcome Measures and Analysis: Outcome measures included counselor and client perceptions toward increasing CVV use, fruit and vegetable consumption, and estimates of weekly food spending. Data was analyzed using Fisher's exact test and independent t-tests.

Results: There was a significant difference between counselor and client perceptions regarding adequate fruit and vegetable consumption (0% vs. 96%; $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, there was a significant difference in counselor and client estimates of fruit and vegetable spending per week as a percentage of their food budget (10% vs. 28%; $p = 0.004$). On average, clients reported spending \$10.62 on fruits and vegetables per household member per week. Counselors and clients differed in their perceptions of improving CVV use. Most counselors believed that making it easier to use CVV while shopping would be the most impactful strategy, while most clients reported that cashiers not knowing how to check out with CVV was the biggest barrier. Counselors and clients agreed on strategies to improve fruit and vegetable consumption. The top strategy for both groups was learning to shop for produce on a budget.

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