Pilot Evaluation of Deliciously Healthy Teaching Kitchen Intervention for Chronic Disease Patients

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Background

Deliciously Healthy is a culinary nutrition program supporting patients with diet-related chronic diseases. The program consists of six, 90-minute weekly online virtual sessions, taught by a registered dietitian, where participants learn culinary basics and healthful recipes, practice mindful eating and set SMART GOALS. The recipes consist of basic low-cost, whole food ingredients. Working together virtually, participants enjoy peer support and bond around the common challenge of making the time to prioritize healthful food choices.

Methods

Use of Theory or Research: Six sequential culinary nutrition sessions were informed by Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) theory and the Framework for 10 Experiential Drivers of Behavior Change (Fredericks et al 2020).

Target Audience: Thirty one patients with diet-related diseases were recruited among 4 cohorts between April and June 2021. Patients were referred from Gouverneur Hospital in NYC. Two cohorts were English speaking and two Spanish speaking.

Evaluation Methods: Pre- and post-program online surveys about participants’ confidence on meal planning, selecting fruits and vegetables, knife skills and dietary habits were conducted. Qualitative data are collected through participant interviews at the 3, 6, 9 and 12 month marks.

Results

Of the participants who completed pre- and post- surveys (N=14), 100% reported improvement in their ratings on a likert scale of 1-6 for all questions. Despite the small sample size, paired t-tests showed statistical significance for: confidence in adjusting a recipe to make it healthier (p value <.001) and confidence in using the recipe templates (p value 0.023), 3 months after program completion. All 14 participants reported improvements in their food/eating behaviors.

Conclusions

Overall, participants in Deliciously Healthy have reported finding the program beneficial. Despite a small sample size, the finding of statistical significance related to participants selecting fruits and vegetables, adjusting recipes to make it healthier, and use of the recipe templates are encouraging. The remaining interviews will reveal whether the new behaviors are sustainable.

Table 1. Participants reported statistically significant changes in their confidence related to two healthy eating behaviors.