



# Chronic Disease Self-Management Program



## History

The Division of Family and Community Medicine in the School of Medicine at Stanford University received a five-year research grant from the federal Agency for Health Care Research and Policy and the State of California Tobacco-Related Diseases office. The purpose of the research was to develop and evaluate, through a randomized controlled trial, a community-based self-management program that assists people with chronic illness. The study was completed in 1996.

The Program was written by Dr. Kate Lorig, Virginia González, MPH, and Diana Laurent, MPH, all of the Stanford Patient Education Research Center. Ms. González and Ms. Laurent also served as integral members of the research team, along with Halsted Holman, MD, Stanford Professor of Medicine; David Sobel, MD, Regional Director of Patient Education for the Northern California Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program; Albert Bandura, PhD, Stanford Professor of Psychology; and Byron Brown, Jr., PhD, Stanford Professor of Health Research and Policy.

The process of the program was based on the experience of the investigators and others with self-efficacy, the confidence one has that he or she can master a new skill or affect one's own health. The content of the workshop was the result of focus groups with people with chronic disease, in which the participants discussed which content areas were the most important for them.

## Program Description

The Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) is a workshop given once a week, for six weeks, for two and a half hours per session. Workshops take place in community settings such as senior centers, churches, libraries and hospitals. Subjects covered include: 1) techniques to deal with problems such as frustration, fatigue, pain and isolation, 2) appropriate exercise for maintaining and improving strength, flexibility, and endurance, 3) appropriate use of medications, 4) communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals, 5) nutrition, 6) decision making, and, 7) how to evaluate new treatments.

The process in which the program is taught is what makes it effective. Classes are highly participative, where mutual support and success build the participants' confidence in their ability to manage their health and maintain active and fulfilling lives.

Workshops are facilitated by two highly-trained leaders, one or both of whom are non-health professionals with chronic diseases themselves. These facilitators are often-times volunteers, and all have attend an intense multi-day training that includes reviews of the entire course content and opportunities to practice teach parts of the session.

People with a variety of different chronic health problems attend the workshops together. Each participant in the workshop receives a copy of the companion book, *Living a Healthy Life With Chronic Conditions*, and an audio relaxation CD, *Relaxation for Mind and Body*.

## Program Outcomes

Original research (1) showed that the treatment group demonstrated significant improvement:

- In all four health behavior variables ( $P < 0.01$ )
  - Number of minutes per week of stretching/strengthening and aerobic exercise
  - Increased practice of cognitive symptom management
  - Improved communication with their physician.
- In five of the health status variables ( $P < 0.02$ )
  - Self-rated health
  - Disability
  - Social/role activities limitation
  - Energy/fatigue
  - Health distress.

The treatment group also had fewer hospitalizations ( $P < 0.05$ ) and spent, on average, 0.8 fewer nights in the hospital ( $P = 0.01$ ).

6-month follow-up data show participants (1):

- Increased their aerobic exercise and use of coping strategies ( $P < 0.05$ ).
- Decreased their disability and health distress while increasing their social and role activities ( $P < 0.05$ ).
- Visits to physicians decreased by 0.98 ( $P < 0.05$ ).

## Program References

1. Lorig KR, Sobel DS, Stewart AL, Brown Jr BW, Ritter PL, González VM, Laurent DD, Holman HR. Evidence suggesting that a chronic disease self-management program can improve health status while reducing utilization and costs: A randomized trial. *Medical Care*, 37(1):5-14, 1999.
2. Lorig KR, Ritter P, Stewart AL, Sobel DS, Brown BW, Bandura A, González VM, Laurent DD, Holman HR. Chronic Disease Self-Management Program: 2-Year Health Status and Health Care Utilization Outcomes. *Medical Care*, 39(11),1217-1223, 2001.
3. *In HMO setting*: Lorig KR, Sobel DS, Ritter PL, Laurent D, Hobbs M. Effect of a Self-Management Program on Patients with Chronic Disease. *Effective Clinical Practice*, 4(6),256-262, 2001.



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