

Arlene Miller, PhD, RN, FAAN – Funded Project

Internet-based Health Promotion Intervention for Home Care Workers: Pilot Study

Research Team

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Award Period: 10/01/2010-09/30/2011

Funding Source: College of Nursing Research Fund

ABSTRACT

As the number of people over age 65 increases in the next few decades, a concomitant increase is anticipated in the number of non-family home care workers (HCWs) whose services enable elders to remain in their home and communities longer as they age. A work environment of long hours, limited time off, and relative isolation from peer support, however, creates unique health risks and barriers to health behavior to place-bound HCWs. Immigrant women, who constitute approximately one-quarter of the HCW workforce, may be particularly vulnerable, especially live-ins with low acculturation levels. The purpose of this preliminary study is to establish content, relevance, acceptability and feasibility of a multimodal intervention that will incorporate internet-based technology to increase physical activity and social support and reduce symptoms of depressed mood for immigrant home care workers. Specific aims are: 1) Explore the relevance, acceptability and feasibility for a lifestyle physical activity and social support intervention using distance technology; and 2) Develop a modified intervention to increase lifestyle physical activity and social support targeted to immigrant home care workers. Key informant and individual interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires with employers, supervisors, and currently employed HCWs will be used to confirm salient issues regarding the work life and health of HCWs, and explore approaches to implementation of an intervention in HCW work and community settings. This study builds on our prior work on health and adaptation of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, and will elicit information necessary to modify and expand a lifestyle activity intervention using culturally- and worksite-appropriate strategies. The physical activity and social support intervention we will develop from this preliminary study will be tested for feasibility and efficacy in a future NIH grant.