



Mid Atlantic Regional Chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine

Annual Scientific Meeting, November 1st – 2nd, 2019
Conference Proceedings

International Journal of Exercise Science, Volume 9, Issue 8



Diabetes Prevention Program: An Investigation of Lifestyle Coaches' Habits and Motivations

Melanie K. Sookiasian¹, Selen Razon¹, Patricia G. Davidson¹, Umit Tokac², Melissa A. Reed¹. ¹West Chester University, West Chester PA ²University of Missouri, St Louis, MO

The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) was created after a 27-center randomized clinical trial was conducted to determine if lifestyle intervention alone, or combined with pharmacological therapy could prevent or delay the onset of Type 2 Diabetes (T2DM). Lifestyle intervention decreased the incidence of T2DM by 58% compared with a 31% reduced incidence in the pharmacological group. A key component of the DPP are lifestyle coaches (LC). LC deliver curriculum intended to initiate and promote lifestyle change to individuals at risk for T2DM. Little is known about the behaviors of the LC. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to investigate the habits and motivations of LC to elucidate their motivations for coaching. **METHODS:** A sixteen item electronic survey was emailed to LC. Data was analyzed using descriptive and qualitative analyses, as well as chi-square tests. **RESULTS:** Sixty-three participants (60 female, 3 male) (Age range = 18-75+) responded to the survey. Descriptive analyses indicated that the majority of responding coaches worked in healthcare fields (59.65%) and achieved ≥ 150 minutes of physical activity (PA) per week (68.42%). Qualitative analyses indicated two types of motivation for coaching: internal (N=19) and external motivation (N=36). External motivation further included two sub-themes external-others (N=11) and external-self (N=25). Additional chi-square analyses revealed that those with bachelor and master's degrees, and working full time in healthcare occupations reported significantly less incidence of diabetes ($p < .05$) and higher instances of achieving 150 minutes or more PA per week ($p < .05$). **CONCLUSION:** These results suggest that lifestyle coaches are employed mainly in healthcare fields and are motivated to coach by external factors. The results indicate coaches may serve as appropriate role models in the adoption of PA behaviors and could help with training, delivery, and recruitment efforts for future coaches.

Supported by Health Promotion Council (HPC) Grant.