

Educating Health guides

to improve individual empowerment in a small community



Boxholm

- A small municipality with a population of 5400 people
- 25 % of the population more than 65 years of age
- Low educational level; higher education 24 % (Sweden 41 %)





Background

- Educating Health guides is a part of the larger initiative called "Prosperous Boxholm"
- Prosperous Boxholm is an initiative to engage a variety of actors in society to improve general wellbeing and health, and to reduce mental illness
- More women than men with depression and anxiety
(62% : 38%)
- More men than women with cardiovascular diseases
(66% : 34%)



The intervention

- Construct and implement the education for voluntary Health guides
- Prevent mental illness among women and raise citizens' awareness of how to promote and maintain their health
- Enhance the association to health and wellbeing in the everyday life
- We wanted to invent something concrete, to increase peoples' knowledge, that focused on empowerment and what to do to avoid illness
- The Health guides are prepared to talk individually about health and are also encouraged to create health promotion efforts in the workplace or in their private network



The education

- Voluntary course with no fee and optional engagement afterwards
- 3 meetings, each 3 hours (Step 1 and Step 2)
- Lecture and practice
- Everyone who attends all sessions receives a diploma, sweater and bag of educational material





The education

Step 1

- What is health and wellbeing?
- Attitudes, behavior and habits
- Mental health
- Physical activity
- Stress ; Recovery
- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Tobacco; cigarettes, snus, electronic cigarettes and water pipe/hookah
- Motivational interviewing (MI)

Step 2; advanced course

- Motivational interviewing (MI)
- Preventing, promoting and intervene in health and wellbeing
- Nutritional addings; food labelling
- Energy metabolism
- Physical activity and training



Results

- Step 1: 33 Health guides
- Step 2: 16 Health guides





Results

- Most Health guides are women (31 : 2)
- Mean age 50 years
- The guides should act as health inspirers, however this assignment is carried out according to the individual guide's commitment and will
- The evaluation of the intervention has been performed in focus-groups with the Health guides
- Most guides state that they have trained for their own sake, and also to help and support others



Discussion

- To keep interest in being an active Health guide, the guides will be offered further education and inspiration
- To evaluate the long term effect of Health guides in the society of Boxholm, further investigations are needed. However, other trials have shown that a coach or guide trained in motivational techniques can be helpful in initiating behavioral change such as changing eating habits or increasing physical activity
- The Health guides are already a popular part of the Boxholm social life and they play an active part in social events
- Some guides have started lunch-workouts at work, and there is also an Health guide-account on Instagram
- There is an interest of starting more educations for Health guides within the county council of Östergötland

Thank you for listening!