

# **Improving Osteoporosis Screening Rates of Women in Rural Southern Illinois**

*Women's Health Initiative*



# Student Objective

- To improve osteoporosis screening of patients age 65 and older within a rural health center's patient population through a new screening program. The United States Preventative Services Task Force recommends, based on review of published literature, age-based screening of women for osteoporosis.

# Problem

- There is limited access to bone mineral density testing in the rural southern Illinois population served by a rural health center.
- Population in the counties served by the Southern 7 Public Health Department has hip fracture rate approximately 4.2/1000 population 65 and older (IPLAN data system)
- Osteoporosis is a risk factor for hip fracture

# Participating Organization

- Multi-specialty Rural Health Center includes main clinic site and several satellite clinics.
- Serves 4 of the Southern Seven counties.
- Current screening methods used at the clinic are inconsistently performed and recorded, with only 0-50% of female patients 65 and older screened by recording changes in height.
- Those deemed at high risk or with height changes (that might indicate vertebral fracture) are then referred for BMD testing.
- Getting women in for evaluation is difficult.

# Women's Health Initiative

- Established in 1998 by the Illinois Department of Public Health with funding provided by the Illinois General Assembly
- Created to enable communities to begin or to enhance women's health programming efforts in the areas of outreach, health promotion and education

# Women's Health Initiative

- Office of Women's Health teamed with UIC to develop 8 model programs in the priority areas of cardiovascular disease, community planning for women's health, eating disorders/disordered eating, menopause and osteoporosis.
- Two of these models focus on osteoporosis

# Building Better Bones

- The program will provide education, risk assessment and bone density screening for osteoporosis.
- Group educational sessions will be held covering risk factors and prevention (e.g. exercise, diet, fall prevention)
- Provide bone density screening.
- Encourage follow-up with a health care professional.

# Program Goals

- Increase women's knowledge of osteoporosis and its prevention.
- Increase in the number of women being screened for osteoporosis.
- Increase in identification of moderate and high-risk women and timely referral for physician treatment.
- Increase in the number of women taking measures to prevent osteoporosis.

# Evaluation

- Pre and post-test evaluation of participant's knowledge with each educational session.
- Three month follow up behavior change survey.
- Log of participants' screening results and number of women with physician referral and follow through of treatment.

# Status

- Grant application completed.
- As was not 100% grant, approximately \$2000 dollars would be required to fulfill the organization's responsibility in funding.
- Amount not available by grant deadline.
- Application tabled until fiscal year 2004