



YMCA of the Triangle **YEAR 2 REPORT**

COMMUNITY INTEGRATED HEALTH

In collaboration with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC),
NC Medical Society Foundation and the NC Alliance of YMCAs



**BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina**

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This three-year investment began in February 2019 to pilot YMCA Medical Memberships. Participating individuals continue to improve their health which ultimately impacts all areas of their life and the communities where they live, work and play. This innovative, first-of-its-kind, community-integrated health collaboration assists clinical partners in achieving their population health outcomes needed to maximize value-based reimbursement opportunities. At the same time, health care costs for BCBSNC are lowered. The ultimate goal is for YMCA Medical Memberships to become a direct contract reimbursement model that will be operationalized throughout the state of North Carolina. Phase 2 of the YMCA Medical Membership is to build a comprehensive care team structure to further impact BCBSNC quality measures by providing clinical services through the YMCA's community based approach. Additional care team members can include but not be limited to: physical therapist, registered dietitian and behavioral health professional.

This past year was anything but normal. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to serve and support the community in a multitude of ways through the evidence-based programs of a Medical Membership. The YMCA of the Triangle, implemented 33 programs, serving 525 total participants (353 BCBSNC beneficiaries). More than 75% of programs were facilitated via virtual platforms as mask mandates and social distancing precautions remain in place for fitness facilities. For personal safety reasons, 88% of participants chose virtual programming options. Our Community Health Team, despite the many challenges, executed programs, engaged with members and provided a quality experience while diligently following our fidelity measures to capture successful health outcomes.

Learnings from this year include:

- The Weight Loss Program proved to be the most popular program by enrollment numbers. However, it was one of the more challenging programs to facilitate virtually, with participants self-reporting weekly weigh-ins.
- Our geographic boundaries were expanded due to virtual programming. Logistical barriers were limited: easier access, more time to participate, and no travel time needed.
- In partnership with the NC Medical Society Foundation, we continued building a User Interface Software, OCHI, which enables the YMCA's evidence-based programs to:
 1. Administratively organize classes and schedules
 2. Manage YMCA data collection in a HIPAA compliant custom EHR
 3. Receive local provider referrals electronically due to bi-directional integration
 4. Electronically deliver patient results to the provider's EHR

- Recruiting providers and securing referrals is a critical piece to the success of the YMCA Medical Membership program.
- Health outcomes and attendance of classes were not impacted by our need to only be seen through a remote platform. The block timelines for programs remained consistent for scheduling:

Block 1: September – December 2020

Block 2: January – April 2021

Block 3: May – August 2021

Fortunately, thanks to the generous support from BCBSNC, the mission of our work did not change, only the application for how the work was completed.

HIGHLIGHTS AND IMPACT

BCBSNC Health Outcomes:

- **Weight Loss Program:** 46% had weight loss, 47% had baseline
- **LIVESTRONG at the Y Program:** 93% had strength leg improvement; 71% had strength chest improvement; 80% had cardio improvement
- **YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program:** The average weight loss for year-one completers was 4.3%. All year-two programs are currently in progress.
- **Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring Program:** 76% had improvement in systolic and/or diastolic readings
- **Moving for Better Balance Program:** 74% had improvement in TUG (timed up and go)
- **Healthy Weight and Your Child (BCBS & self-pay participants):** 100% had positive health outcomes with BMI (60% decreased BMI, 40% slowed their BMI) *pediatric program goal is maintenance

Overall Participant qualitative survey feedback:

- 74% reported they somewhat or strongly agree that they met their health goals
- 89% reported they somewhat or strongly agree that their health coach was supportive
- 91% reported they somewhat or strongly agree they had an overall positive experience
- 75% reported they completed their medical membership
- Average satisfaction on a scale of 1-10 with virtual programming was an 8
- Of those that did not complete, highest reason listed was "Life Occurrences"
- 94% would consider joining the YMCA



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Duke Family Medicine

In May, Dr. Karen Scherr presented on behalf of Duke Family Medicine and the YMCA of the Triangle as a part of the Family Medicine Leads Emerging Leaders Institute, an initiative of the **American Academy of Family Physicians**. The presentation highlighted electronic referrals, citing our YMCA as one of the first community health-based organizations currently sending and receiving referrals and medical data, as a part of our Medical Membership and Evidence-Based Health Initiatives (EBHIs). Referrals are coming via EPIC connecting with the YMCA's data platform, OCHI. Dr. Scherr mentioned that in their clinic, there are more than 5,723 patients that could potentially benefit from the YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program. This is an incredible affirmation of this pilot and its potential to impact community health. Since September of 2020, we have received over 200 referrals through this network of Duke Family Medicine physicians and Lincoln Community Health Center physicians. Our goal is to integrate additional evidence-based programs with Duke Family Medicine.

“Working with the YMCA of the Triangle has been a wonderful collaborative process and true partnership. The creation of an integrated, streamlined electronic referral process allows Duke Clinicians to help our patients take advantage of the well-established, evidence-based programs available at the local YMCA. I am looking forward to the next steps of expanding use of the referral process beyond Duke Family Medicine and replicating the process for other medical management programs available at the YMCA.”

—Dr. Karen Scherr, Duke Family Medicine

NC Prevents Diabetes Project

The YMCA of the Triangle also participates in this initiative thanks to the BCBSNC \$5M funding for statewide diabetes prevention efforts.

“The YMCA of the Triangle is a strong community-based partner facilitating DPP classes across their service area. In a time where enrollment could have declined in the last year, they continued to engage, support and lead efforts for DPP enrollment.”
—Casey Collins, MPH - Diabetes Prevention Program Coordinator at NC State University

CDC/Y-USA Virtual Delivery Pilot Project Grant

The YMCA of the Triangle is one of six YMCAs in the country selected by Y-USA and the CDC to support a virtual Diabetes Prevention Program platform.



PARTICIPANT SUCCESS STORIES



Stacy, Weight Loss Program Participant – BCBSNC Beneficiary

“I am thankful for the Medical Membership at the YMCA because life happens, and I had strayed from my healthy habits. I got married, started a new job, and after a few years, gained an extra few pounds after my first child. I tried to jump in to exercise, only to later realize with the additional weight, my body could not support the new me. Soon came several injuries to the knee; I gained more weight and had moved into orthopedic shoes after suffering with plantar-fasciitis. I consulted several doctors in the triangle who recommended surgery, cool-sculpting or diet pills.

When I started this program, I could barely walk with all sorts of aches and pains. Today I run, bike, swim, lift weights and enjoy all sorts of outdoor activities with my daughter, husband and new friends. Through this class, I have also learned how to eat better, sleep better and exercise more. Most importantly, I have made

new friends that support me, and I support them. The YMCA has created a community of support with other classmates, YMCA instructors and coaches. A big thank you to Lauren Musolf, Paula Ruff, and Stacy Carver. Today, I live a better life.”

“Over time, my goals changed from just losing weight to a better lifestyle. I have learned that this class is a part of my life and that it keeps me accountable to myself and others. I hope that it is always available. Thank you to the YMCA for creating this community of support.”

Shelley, LIVESTRONG at the Y Participant

“I was initially NOT going to participate. I was afraid I would never be able to work out twice a week for 90 minutes. But the instructors were amazing and taught me so much on my cancer journey. For three months, I learned how to exercise properly. LIVESTRONG is not just exercise. Our group talked, shared and communicated. I can’t thank the YMCA LIVESTRONG staff enough for this amazing program.”



Karen, Weight Loss and Blood Pressure–Self Monitoring Participant – BCBSNC Beneficiary

“Joining the YMCA with a Medical Membership has been such a positive experience. I’ve found the weekly weight loss sessions to be supportive and nonjudgmental. Our session leader and the members of the group inspire me to continue on my journey. The trust within the group encourages accountability while removing guilt of not always staying on track. Focusing, not on the number on the scale, but rather the changes in mindset and lifestyle, have made an amazing difference in learning how to gain control in my health and wellness.”

“I’ve also been working with a very excellent Health Coach through both the weight loss program and the Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring program. She has been invaluable in providing additional resources and encouragement. She has always been available for any questions or concerns I’ve had throughout this process. Having someone to check in with and that you feel comfortable with is an invaluable asset. Thank you for providing these wonderful programs.”



Laura, Moving for Better Balance Participant – BCBSNC Beneficiary

“As I am about to finish my second series of Moving for Better Balance, I am filled with gratitude. I realized my balance was improving about half way through the first series of classes. An entrance to my condo complex has four steps at the door. One day I went down them, with my hands full of things, realizing I did not even think about needing to hang on to the railing. Those steps had been intimidating to me. Movement is medicine for bodies. This class gives me motivation to move: two times a week during class and at least one other time with homework. My body is stronger. I can get up and down from sitting and in and out of a car easier. During class there is encouragement, to listen to my body and to pay attention to how it feels. This class connects mind and body. I plan to continue to take it the rest of my life!”

OPENING NEW YMCA LOCATIONS

In early 2021, the impossible was made possible during a pandemic year through the opening of another YMCA full facility, the East Triangle YMCA. It serves Clayton, along with Central and Eastern Johnston County. Our Medical Membership team began work immediately to identify and train staff in this location to support evidence-based health initiatives. While we continue to expand our reach into Johnston County, our commitment to educating providers and the community about our offerings will also continue.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION WORK

Continuing the work in Southeast Raleigh and the Poole Family YMCA, both sites are committed to helping address food security with our neighbors. Throughout the past year, YMCA facilities served as regional food hubs, and Y buses hit the road across the region to help distribute more than 2 million meals and supplies to children in need—with the help of 400 volunteers.

The Southeast Raleigh YMCA collaborated with the Interfaith Food Shuttle to address the growing needs of nutrition education, while facilitating their Cooking Matters curriculum to a group of 14 Medical Members in the Wake County Schools and YMCA co-owned teaching kitchen. Medical Members had the opportunity to learn about healthy options, while participating and observing with staff as they prepared a meal each week.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In order to fulfill our YMCA mission to serve all, we offer financial assistance for Medical Membership, discounting the price based on the participant's income level. In year two, we discounted \$2,628.48 to allow Medical Membership to be more affordable for those who desired to participate.

IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMS

YEAR 2 SUMMARY

| PROGRAM | | YEAR 2 OVERALL | YEAR 2 BCBS GOAL |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| LIVESTRONG at the Y | Total (BCBS) | 65 (25) | 150 |
| Moving for Better Balance | Total (BCBS) | 50 (34) | 135 |
| Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring | Total (BCBS) | 61 (54) | 180 |
| Healthy Weight and Your Child | Total (BCBS) | 20 (4)* | 75 |
| Weight Loss Program | Total (BCBS) | 165 (150) | 195 |
| Diabetes Prevention Program** | Total (BCBS) | 108 (40) | 90 |
| Health Coaching / P3 | Total (BCBS) | 56 (46) | n/a |
| Total Served Medical Membership | Total (BCBS) | 525 (353)*** | 825 |

*Social impact drivers impact this program heavily with Medicaid as the primary beneficiary for these families.

**The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is a 12-month program and is a covered benefit from other Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina funding, provided through North Carolina State University funding. Data reported above is consistent with new programs launched in each block. The Y will share pre/post data with payors and physicians.

*** Due to low enrollment, 41 classes were postponed which affected approximately 60 participants.



As a community and a state, we continue to open facilities in full capacity. According to the Global Health and Fitness Association, we understand, “about 49% of Americans who canceled their health club memberships due to COVID-19 plan to return to a physical gym in the next 6-12 months,” only, furthering our commitment to this work into year 3. Through the adversity, we stand ready for the opportunities ahead. For the success shown, we are prepared to build, expand and serve these evidence-based programs in a broader and deeper capacity to our communities. The partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, NC Medical Society Foundation, NC YMCA Alliance, and clinical partnerships together are leading the way.

Thank you again for your generous support of this work and your continued trust in the YMCA as a leading local charitable organization committed to strengthening communities through focusing on programs to support the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments or suggestions you have regarding this exciting and important work.

CONTACTS

Susan Pettengill

Vice President Healthy Living, YMCA of the Triangle

Susan.Pettengill@ymcatriangle.org