

Quarterly Report

Name and address of reporting institution:

Grillo Health Information Center

4715 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder, CO 80303

Project Title: Grillo Senior Center Outreach Project

Name of person submitting report: Johnny Daurio

Email address: JohnnyDaurio@GrilloCenter.org

Telephone number: 303 956-4152

Reporting Period start date: October 16, 2009

Reporting Period end date: January 15, 2010

Publicity:

The Grillo Health Information Center has aggressively pursued promotional activities at multiple locations as well as media publicity during this reporting period. In early December, the Boulder Daily Camera published an article written by the Grillo Center Executive Director on the benefits of using our health information services with reliable, evidence-based data bases versus typical search engine research on the internet. The article also talked about the imminent move of Grillo Center headquarters to a hospital institution location and the targeted outreach projects we have developed and are developing. In early January 2010, the Boulder Daily Camera published a feature article on Grillo Health Information Center services, new locations, and how we can serve the health information needs of seniors and the community overall. The Grillo Center also revised a Filler Ad that the Camera uses from time to time, with new information about our services and location. The Executive Director also sent a letter to the newspaper editor that was published in early January 2010.

The Grillo Health Information Center staff has been doing presentations to another senior community in order to generate interest in our trained volunteers providing free access to reliable health information on-site. The Grillo Center has also been negotiating with Channel 22, a local educational television that broadcasts to tens of thousands of households in the area. We hope to reach more of the senior community through this media connection.

Outreach:

Other accomplishments:

In addition to the on-going on-site presence at the Golden West Retirement Community, which continually responds with positive feedback, the Grillo Health Information Center has actively engaged the administration and resident population of another well-established retirement community called Frasier Meadows. Multiple presentations and numerous meetings have taken place during this reporting period in order to educate and cultivate collaboration with this senior community. We have been invited to present to the Resident Council, to the sub-committee on senior activities, and to the general resident population as a whole. In this way, more and more of the seniors have been able to ask direct questions, to better understand how our services can be a valuable resource, and to participate in the decision-making about the implementation of this project. As of mid-January, negotiations to establish an on-site presence are well under way. We expect that similar to the Golden West Retirement Community, we will place a trained volunteer at Frasier Meadows to spend one-on-one time with residents of this retirement community. Based on lessons learned from the West Senior Center Outreach Project and our positive experiences with the Golden West collaboration, we will schedule appointments with interested residents to assure volunteer staff time is productive and individual senior needs are met.

During this reporting period, we have redesigned our website to be more user-friendly and more efficient in capturing and recording information about the services we provide. We have different log sheets for each location, and are tracking utilization and research especially targeted to the senior population. In the upcoming quarter, we will be training to the new application tools and refining our procedures to ensure consistency in how we serve seniors and others needing assistance.

Target audience:

We have found that the Grillo Health Information Center volunteer, in one-on-one confidential interaction, is able to provide caring support to help the senior citizen frame the health question, and understand exactly what information they need. We find we are able to establish trust and personal connections that are meaningful for both the patron and the volunteer. In the initial stages of this project at the West Senior Center, we have found that some seniors were reluctant to admit they need our services, perhaps because the visibility of other seniors was notable. By connecting to our target population in retirement communities, we are learning that to engage the resident population as much as or even more, than the administration itself, is extremely important. We believe that the services we provide at Golden West are more effective, and anticipate that ownership and anticipation of our on-site presence at Frasier Meadows will be enhanced by the preparation and introductory activities in which we are engaged.

Goals, Outcomes, Objectives:

We initiated a concerted effort in early January to provide a new service within Boulder Community Foothills Hospital to improve health information literacy for patients and

family members. Although this effort was targeted to anyone with health information needs, including those with low health literacy, we have found that through the publicity mentioned above, many senior citizens have accessed our services. We have been extremely busy with requests for reliable health information research. A new development for us as well, is that an unusual number of senior citizens who are now retired, have applied to be Grillo Health Information Center volunteers with us. A few have even been those who reside in the very retirement communities where we have conducted activities and presentations. Our volunteer workforce is becoming stronger with this level of highly educated and motivated senior citizens. We believe this change adds credibility in the eyes of other seniors who come to the Grillo Health Information Center for their health information needs.

Our overall objectives have not changed. We are still making evidence-based health information available to senior populations and increasing the number of underserved seniors who are educated about health care, nutrition, medications, and alternative treatment options. New insights have been mentioned in the previous section above. These have helped us better introduce health information services and reach more seniors effectively.

Evaluation:

Our evaluations continue to be very interactive. Patrons often tell us how helpful our research has been, that they would not know what to do without our services, and how grateful they are for assistance during a time of need. Both the principal investigator and the project coordinator often solicit informal feedback from the senior population. It is an easy and comfortable way for seniors to share experiences and benefits, and concerns. We receive consistently positive feedback on the formal evaluations, which are provided to every patron we serve. We will be analyzing the data in the next quarter to help us refine and improve our services to this population.

During this last quarter, we have begun a two-fold process to insure that our research is of the highest quality. The Board of Directors formed a committee comprised of two physicians, one medical librarian, and our staff to determine a set of procedures for quality and consistency. At the start of the New Year, we have implemented review procedures that all volunteers must follow before research is released to the patron. In this way we are able to identify strengths and weaknesses of our volunteers and provide on-the-job training and technical assistance. One of the physicians on this committee, who also actively served on the Board of Directors, unexpectedly passed away in late December. The Board is recruiting for new members to fill our need for broad representation and continued accountability.

Impacts and Observations:

As we gain more experience with serving this targeted population, we find that expansion and collaboration among additional partners is being facilitated. Sometimes this occurs by invitation for us to share more of what we do, and sometimes it is by initiative to

connect with other community institutions serving this population. It is important to assure initial interactions with seniors is positive, even more so than with administrators who are often looking to meet the needs of their constituents. If we are able to connect with the existing need, as we did initially with our formal needs assessment of the West Senior Center population, and as we are doing with our new friends in retirement communities, the likelihood for success is much greater. It does take time to establish the relationship of trust, in both inter-personal interactions and in relevant research to meet specific needs. As this trust grows, the utilization increases, the awareness and education increases, and so does the utilization, and ultimately the services become more valued.

Planned Activities:

As mentioned above, we plan to expand health information services to other senior populations in other settings. We will be meeting with two other retirement communities. We plan to train more senior volunteers to conduct health information research. Our new web design and development is underway, which will make us more accountable and efficient. We have engaged with a software development company to enhance our technological expertise and contributions. The intent is to prepare the Grillo Health Information Center for wider expansion and capability to respond effectively to increased requests for health information research.

Q. “I am computer literate. What can the Grillo Health Information Center do for me that I can’t do for myself with a Google search?”

A. The Healthy People 2010 project defines health literacy as the ability to read, understand and act on health information. Low health literacy incurs unnecessary health care costs to society between \$106 and \$235 billion each year. Even among the 1 in 9 adults who have proficient health literacy skill, the sheer amount of information there is to process can be overwhelming. Adding to that challenge, Google and other Internet search engines access only 7% of available health-related information. And, 75% of those who seek health information on-line do not check for accuracy, currency, or source of the information.

There is an increasing quantity of questionable and unreliable health information on the Internet. If you try a typical search for diabetes, or breast or prostate cancer, you will find tens of millions of resources. If you compared the quality of the results of a Google search to the Grillo Center researcher, you will find a significant difference in the relevance and credibility of the search results. We provide the latest, science-based medical information to help individuals make better health care decisions. This leads to improved physician-patient communication and outcomes.

The Grillo Center, after 12 years, is relocating its headquarters from the Boulder Public Library to the Tebo Center at Boulder Community Hospital Foothills location. We believe we can meet more of the community’s needs operating independently at the Tebo Center, along with 5 or 6 satellite locations. The Board of Directors and staff wish to thank the Library for its tremendous support over the last 12 years.

Individuals and families are able to access Grillo Center assistance in person, by telephone, or by email. Volunteers are trained to provide safe, confidential, trustworthy information. 94% of those who have evaluated our services rate the quality of Grillo Center assistance as “excellent”. Services are free, but donations help us help others.

Johnny Daurio is the Executive Director of the Grillo Health Information Center. For assistance with researching health topics, contact the Grillo Center at the Tebo Center of Boulder Community’s Hospital’s Foothills campus, 303 441-4111, or at www.grillocenter.org. We are not physicians, and therefore no research or assistance should be interpreted as medical advice. We encourage informed consultation with your physician or medical practitioner.

Where to find it

www.healthypeople.gov/Document/HTML/Volume1/11HealthCom.htm

www.nih.gov/clearcommunication/healthliteracy.htm

Pew Internet and American Life Project, Report-Online Health 2006, 10/29

www.ahrq.gov/clinic/epcsums/litsum.htm

www.mlanet.org/resources.consumr_index.html



Located in the Tebo Family Medical Pavilion at Boulder Community
Foothills Hospital, 4715 Arapahoe Ave., 720-854-7293,
HealthQuestions@GrilloCenter.org, www.GrilloCenter.org

Ask us any health
related question!
We access the latest
health information
so you can make
informed decisions
about your health
and well being!