EDITORIAL

Introduction to Health Coaching

健康辅导简介

Introducción al Formación sanitaria

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This issue and the July 2013 issue of *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* on health coaching present a series of original research, reviews, case reports, healthcare policy discussions, editorials, and interviews with some of the leaders in the field. Health coaching has emerged as an important example of global convergence in healthcare and a systems-oriented approach integrated with a team-based approach to healthcare, as evidenced by these articles.

September 2013 marks the third anniversary of the “Summit on Standards and Credentialing of Professional Coaches in Health Care and Wellness” that was supported by The Institute for Integrative Health. At this summit, more than 50 participants began to develop a model of what health coaching could become and how it could support health and wellness through sustainable lifestyle changes. Many of these principals are eloquently captured in Dr Lawson’s editorial, “The Four Pillars of Health Coaching: Preserving the Heart of a Movement.”¹

We are honored to have as guest editors Ruth Wolever, PhD, and Karen Lawson, MD, ABIHM. Dr Wolever, from Duke University, is the director of health psychology at Duke Integrative Medicine and the director of Behavioral Health & Lifestyle Coaching at the Duke Diet & Fitness Center. Dr Lawson is the program director for the health coaching track of the Graduate Certificate in Integrative Therapies & Healing Practices at the University of Minnesota.

These two issues of *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* include

- original research articles on health coaching and genomics, the impact of telephonic health coaching on health outcomes, patient empowerment, and the Ithaca Coaching Project, among others;
- a systematic review of the health coaching literature;
- reviews of the integrative health coach training model and health coaching for the underserved;
- editorials, including one from Dr Barbara Dossey offering a review of the nurse coaching literature;
- case reports illustrating the role of health coaching in improving quality of life;
- a healthcare policy article on the value of health coaching healthcare reform; and
- a roundtable discussion with several leaders in the field who share their views on the growing health coaching movement.

The US healthcare system is redesigning its delivery system and building multidisciplinary teams, some of which include health coaches. These teams, which offer a diverse group of healthcare professionals ranging from nurses to dietitians to health coaches, have the patient at the center of care and often prove to be surprisingly cost effective. For example, Sara Horowitz, founder and Executive Director of Freelancers Union in Brooklyn, New York, has helped organize a clinic with two full-time doctors and eight health coaches focusing on health, wellness, and prevention. She contends that the involvement of health coaches will help patients stay healthy and avoid costly hospital stays that could result from failing to follow a treatment plan. Steven Counsell, MD, from the Center for Aging Research at Indiana University uses a team approach combining transitional and primary care to involve patients in an individualized treatment plan. He says, “It’s not just the medical stuff . . . unless you uncover the psychosocial issues—screen for depression or cognitive impairment, lack of social support or health literacy issues—these things send the best-laid plans out the window.” And Tina Sullivan, RN, nursing director of adult medical services at Bronson Healthcare Group in Michigan, advocates a patient-centered “teach-back” method that allows patients to tell their caregivers what they do and don’t understand and encourages them to ask questions, a strategy that tells caregivers what’s working and what needs to be reinforced.²

Health coaching is here to stay and covers a broad range of specialties. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine* aims to publish original articles that highlight this growing movement and promote collaboration.

REFERENCE

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Citation

Global Adv Health Med. 2013;2(3):5. DOI:10.7453/gahmj.2013.048

Key Words

Health coaching, patient-centered care, wellness, prevention