

# Virginia



## Helping Virginians Manage Chronic Disease

“Research on this program has shown that participants are able to manage their symptoms better and communicate more easily with their doctors and loved ones. They feel better, are less limited by their illnesses, and may spend less time in the care of doctors or hospitals.”

—Ramona Schaeffer, MEd, CHES, Virginia Department of Health

### Public Health Problem

Virginia resident Pete Moss was afraid of losing his job because of his many absences after he suffered a stroke last year. To help him overcome this fear, Pete's wife convinced him to go to the You Can! Live Well, Virginia! workshops at a local community center to learn how to live with a chronic health condition.

About 2.2 million Virginians live with at least one chronic disease, such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, asthma, diabetes, or arthritis. Chronic diseases are the leading cause of death in the state. The costs of treating these diseases are high, both in Virginia and throughout the United States. They account for about \$24.6 billion of Virginia's budget and about 75% of the nation's \$1.4 trillion in health care costs each year.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) recognized the urgent need to address risk factors that contribute to chronic disease—poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and stress—in order to improve the health and quality of life of its residents. In 2005, VDH began an aggressive patient education program to help residents learn to manage their chronic conditions, enjoy healthier lifestyles, and reduce health costs over the long term.

### Taking Action

Health officials in Virginia are using part of their Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant to provide state residents, particularly those in communities with high rates of chronic diseases, with better access to the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP). The evidence-based workshops of CDSMP's You Can! Live Well, Virginia! initiative help people with chronic diseases to take charge of their lives. According to many studies, people who participate in CDSMP workshops report less pain, fatigue, and health distress.

In 2010, the VDH and the Virginia Department on Aging worked together to get an additional PHHS Block Grant and expand the statewide outreach of the CDSMP. Thanks to this funding,

- CDSMP coordinators were able to recruit more Virginia adults and their caregivers to participate in workshops teaching them how to live with chronic diseases.
- Participants completed a 6-week course of workshops that taught disease self-management strategies such as goal setting, planning for sick days, problem solving, healthy eating, exercising, and communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals.

### Healthy People 2010 Objective

Community health promotion programs

### PHHS Block Grant Funding

Represents 100% of total program costs



### PHHS Block Grant Coordinator

Virginia Department of Health

109 Governor Street, Suite 721  
Richmond, VA 23219-3623  
Phone: 804-864-7663  
[www.vdh.state.va.us](http://www.vdh.state.va.us)



For more information on the  
PHHS Block Grant, go to  
[www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant](http://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant)

For more information on  
Healthy People, go to  
[www.healthypeople.gov](http://www.healthypeople.gov)



## Taking Action (continued)

- The train-the-trainer model played a critical role in the program's success and included training at the master and community leader levels by certified CDSMP instructors.

## Impact

After taking the CDSMP workshop, Pete Moss is no longer worried about losing his job. Instead, he focuses on being active every day, eating healthier foods, and meeting the challenges of living with a chronic health condition.

In 2010, the PHHS Block Grant helped the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Virginia Department on Aging to achieve the following:

- Across 39 counties and 20 cities, 462 people participated in CDSMP workshops, with 73% completing the program.
- Participants reported improvements in their health and their ability to manage their chronic diseases.

- Nearly 33% of participants said they were better able to relax and manage their emotional stress and physical symptoms. They also reported reductions in health-related stress, pain levels, fatigue, and shortness of breath.
- Healthy lifestyle behaviors, including aerobic activity, increased from 73 minutes to 96 minutes per week.
- Three CDSMP masters' training classes produced 26 new leaders for the next year.

With increased PHHS Block Grant dollars, the VDH increased the number of leaders teaching You Can! Live Well, Virginia! workshops to 41, making this effective intervention more available to Virginians with chronic diseases. Future plans include long-term studies of participants' use of hospital and physician services and evaluation of the effect of these workshops on health care costs.

## PHHS Block Grant Supports Virginia's Healthy People 2011 Priorities

The PHHS Block Grant provides flexible funding that states can use to prevent and control chronic diseases, respond quickly to outbreaks of infections and waterborne diseases, and address their specific public health needs. States can align their programs with health objectives from *Healthy People 2010*.

Virginia uses its funds to address eight health objective priorities, including

- Overweight or obesity in children and adolescents.
- Dental caries experience.
- Community health promotion programs.
- Obesity in adults.
- Rape or attempted rape.

For a complete list of funded health objectives, go to  
[www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/hp2010.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant/hp2010.htm)