

WestView Health Centre Takes on a Healthy Eating Challenge Success Story

This spring, staff at WestView Health Centre in Edmonton Zone participated in a month long Healthy Eating Challenge, using a toolkit developed by AHS dietitians. The idea came from the site director and dietitians who collaborated with the Volunteer Coordinator to organize the challenge.



The challenge was promoted through posters, site newsletters and word of mouth. In total, 11 teams of four and 18 individuals signed up to compete. During the challenge, participants worked towards simple healthy eating goals and collected points for the activities completed. All were excited about the weekly healthy eating activities and even chose to complete bonus point challenges.

“We tried to motivate staff through a weekly email, as well as a display board themed to the weekly challenge activities. Tasty recipes, nutrition information and tips were offered to help participants meet the weekly healthy eating activities”, recalls Angela Stoye, registered dietitian.



All participants were invited to celebrate the success of the 4-week challenge at a ‘wrap up’ healthy potluck. Challengers were encouraged to bring a healthy dish and their recipe to share with colleagues. Prizes were awarded for the first and second place challenge participants, and a variety of healthy-themed door prizes were handed out.



For those interested in trying a healthy eating challenge at their own site, Lisa Gaffney, registered dietitian, recommends ongoing communication with participants; “It’s important to keep the conversation going about healthy eating over the four weeks. We’re all very busy health care staff and so we tend to forget about healthy eating from time to time”.

Many participants commented that they enjoyed learning from their colleagues and sharing new foods and recipes. Others hoped that the healthy foods around the office would continue and replace the less healthy items like chocolates and other high sugar, high fat snacks. Lisa noted “People need very practical and simple tips to eat healthier; so recipes, snack and grocery ideas were all a hit during the challenge.”

To start your own workplace [Healthy Eating Challenge](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/page11144.aspx), access the toolkit here: www.albertahealthservices.ca/nutrition/page11144.aspx.