

Workshop Recruitment Ideas

- Keep a database of sources for publicity – big newspapers, local weeklies, churches (stuff bulletin with flyers), senior centers, radio stations (use fax for them), employee wellness programs (email list), craigslist, etc.
- Make a flyer each time a class is offered, and keep on mailing to this list for 2 years.
- Flyers on walls may attract one or two participants but cannot be counted on to fill a class
- Offer to do a talk at senior centers, clubs, public lecture series, etc. Ask people to put their name and address on a list if even a little interested, and to star their name if they are interested in being a leader.
- Find a physician who knows and likes the program and will tell other doctors about it and the results.
- Anything you can do face to face helps. Talks at community groups, announcements made by leaders (i.e. at church), and talks at community lunch sites.
- Speak at organizational meetings and send emails to professionals in your community. Even though you don't want to depend on them for referrals, it is important for them to encourage members if they ask about the program.
- Hand or mail a reminder card to participants as they register.
- Go where the people are, get names and call then back.
- Start recruiting at least 2 months ahead.
- To get people to come to the first class, collect the class fee ahead of time. If you don't charge, make them mail in a registration form or mail something in.
- Call each participant the week before the class to welcome them.
- Use your sites to recruit. Many churches, senior centers etc. have their own newspapers and/or web sites. Be sure your publicity is included. Also get buy in from the staff at your sites. This may mean attending a staff meeting and telling them about your program and answering questions.
- Use of mass media such as newspapers, TV and radio—radio talk shows can be especially helpful in some areas.
- Flyers in grocery or pharmacy bags
- Information in utility bills
- Standing in front of big box stores like Wal-Mart and talking to people
- Announcements at senior lunch programs
- Emails to employees at their workplace
- Flyers under doors of housing projects or large apartment complexes
- Flyers in the windows of neighborhood stores
- Flyers on community bulletin boards
- Letters with information about the program sent from the physician, health center or clinic. We have found that the uptake on a first letter is about 10% so you will need to send about 150 letters to fill a program.
- A reminder in the electronic medical record to health professionals to refer people to the program or better a link where they can download information and hand it to their patient.
- Past participants can also be a great recruiting resource. If you are giving a course in an area, you can use your data base to mail flyers to past participants in that area and ask that they post them or give them to friends.

Rules of Thumb

- One of the things that we have found is that the more personal your publicity and contact, the more effective.
- Use multiple modes of publicity and usually the more the better. So what if you have too many people. You just give more programs and can show your funding source that you have a high demand.
- Be nice to responders. This sounds simple but what does it mean? Have your phone answered by a real person. When someone leaves a message call them back quickly.
- Be sure that the person on the phone is well trained and can answer questions about the program. Again the more personal the better.
- Once you have someone's contact information, they should be invited multiple times to the program. This information can also be used when you almost have enough people for a program but not quite enough. Sometimes all it takes is a personal phone call to get someone to attend.