

# RECRUITING: WHAT IS YOUR APPROACH?

Sometimes finding and recruiting people for your program can be challenging. People lead busy lives. They can be hard to find. At first, they might not be sure how your program can benefit them. **Use this handout to learn how to overcome these challenges through five approaches.**

## 1 Use community health workers (CHWs) as recruiters

CHWs can be great recruiters because very often they come from the communities they serve and have close connections with community members. They will know where to go to find the people for your program. You will need to make sure that CHWs know how to share what your program is about. They should know how to share information about your program that can attract people who are interested. Here are some examples where a CHW connection is perfect for recruiting:

- Marie, a CHW, lives in the same apartment complex where she will recruit. She knows many of her fellow neighbors, has provided health sessions at the site, and is often the person to whom her neighbors go to for advice. She knows what people will find beneficial in the program, and so she lets them know right away
- David has been a CHW for years. His wife provides GED classes at the local library. He easily recruits people to his program by making a short announcement at the start of his wife's GED classes.
- Rowena is a very active CHW in the Filipino community. Since she takes part in afterschool programs, church events, and outreach programs, she knows exactly whom to talk to recruit Filipino participants.
- Angela works as a CHW at a clinic. She lets the providers know when her upcoming heart health program will start. The providers can then let all their patients know about it.

## 2 Use other recruiters

You may not have CHWs to help you recruit. In this case, find people from your own or other organizations to help you. For example, social workers, receptionists, outreach workers, and nurses may have some recruiting tips for you. They might even be able to help you for a few hours, either as part of their work or as volunteers.

## 3 Work with gatekeepers

If you work with CHWs, you are already working with gatekeepers. These are people in communities who are well connected to community residents, service providers, politicians, and business owners. You will find that doors are opened and recruitment runs smoothly when you work with gatekeepers. Here are some examples of when knowing a gatekeeper is very helpful:

- You might gain access to a hard-to-reach community that is unsure of outsiders.
- There are many benefits to your heart health program, but you need to make sure to share what people will find the **most** important. Talk with a gatekeeper to see what they recommend.

- You need permission to go into a worksite to recruit employees who might join your program. Try to talk with them during their lunch break to recruit many people at one time. You know that if you had someone to connect you to a supervisor, you could do this.
- You have not had luck recruiting in the past and cannot figure out why. You need help from someone who can give you some insider tips.

## 4 Go where people who may join your program go

Promote your program where people live and go often. This includes community centers, churches, neighborhood association meetings, clinics, public health centers, restaurants, laundromats, schools, and shopping centers. If you are unsure where to start, follow these tips:

- The CHWs and other gatekeepers you work with will know the best places to recruit. Ask them to give you a list of places you should go, or see if you can shadow them for a day to learn.
- Keep track of places where you have done recruitment and how it went. Go back to the places where you had luck recruiting and ask people to recommend other places where you can recruit.
- Mark on a map where you and your team have gone. This helps you to see if you are missing some important places. A big wall map works well for this.
- Go to community events, such as health and community resource fairs.

## 5 Use your networks

Make a list of partners, supporters, and other contacts that serve the same community as you do. Tell them that you are recruiting. Ask them for referrals and help in promoting your program. In turn, offer them the same.

Ask the people in your networks whether they:

- Identify people who might want to participate in your program.
- Share information about your program with others. You could say, “While you are at the health fair next week, if people ask about heart health, could you let them know about our program or make our flyers available?”
- Allow you to recruit at regularly scheduled sessions or meetings with people who might be interested in joining your program. People will be more likely to join your program if they hear about it through organizations and people whom they trust. You could say, “Would you mind if I come in at the end of your group meeting and talk for about 5 minutes about my heart health program?”
- Display or hand out your recruiting materials (e.g., flyers, posters, brochures). You could say, “Would it be OK if I hang up some flyers in your community meeting room?”
- Put a sign-up sheet for your program at their front desk or another place where people will see it.