

Abstract Title

Development, Implementation and Evaluation of a Teaching Kitchen at an Acute Care Hospital

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Abstract

Background: A literature review was conducted to determine self-perceived food skills and cooking confidence among Canadians. A need for nutrition education and hands-on food instruction was identified. Literature shows that behaviour change has the greatest impact on increasing nutrition literacy and that people learn best and retain more when their learning experience is hands-on.

Objectives: To pilot and evaluate the implementation of the Teaching Kitchen (TK), an interactive platform to explore food, learn about nutrition, elicit behaviour change and enhance participants cooking skills within a hospital setting.

Methods: A 60-minute 'pop-up' style TK was organized each week and included a food skills demonstration; hands-on recipe preparation; a nutrition education talk lead by the dietitian; and discussion period. Class curriculum, recipes, equipment lists, and small wares order guides were developed by Compass One dietitians and chefs to help address this need. The first TK class was piloted with executive senior hospital staff in order to promote the program within Compass One hospitals and engage VIPs before opening the program to community members.

Results: Feedback from the classes show that the TK pilot has been well received by hospital staff and community members. Results from 100 attendees show that overall class experience was rated 4.81/5.00, 99% of participants would recommend the TK to a friend and 85% said classes were "just right" for their skill level. Positive feedback included: learning new skills, trying new foods and hands-on experience.

Conclusions: Successful implementation of the pilot proves opportunity for growth of the TK and expansion to partner with outpatient programs in acute care hospitals and the community.

Significance to the Field of Dietetics: Cooking at home leads to better health outcomes. This innovative approach to nutrition education helps to impact behaviour change, improves food skills and inspires others to cook more in their homes.

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