

A Case Study Highlighting the Potential for Integrated Shared Medical Appointments with YMCA Programing to Improve Chronic Disease Outcomes

Tara Ahmadi, MD MPH; Kendall Shibuya, DO – Swedish First Hill Family Medicine Residency



BACKGROUND

- Chronic disease burden continues to grow in this country, with recent CDC statistics citing 6 out of 10 Americans have at least one chronic disease and accounts for 90% of the nations \$4.5 trillion in annual health care expenditures (1, 2).
- There is growing evidence highlighting that 50-80% of chronic diseases can be attributed to lifestyle factors such as poor diet, physical inactivity, stress, cigarette smoking and heavy alcohol intake (3-5).
- Despite lifestyle recommendations being at the cornerstone of various chronic disease guidelines from multiple professional societies, there is a gaping void in the amount of time and resources allocated within our health care system towards counseling and supporting patients in making these pivotal lifestyle changes (6).
- The reasons are multifactorial and include infrastructure, reimbursement models, physician training . There is growing evidence that Lifestyle Medicine Shared Medical Appointments (LM SMA) provide a financially sustainable model to provide comprehensive chronic disease management, improve access to care, and address the “quintuple aim” of healthcare (7-12).
- Implementing and scaling LM SMA is challenging and often requires multidisciplinary support.



PURPOSE

- Develop a LM SMA model that partners with a community organization to help provide some of the multidisciplinary support and facilitate community integration.
- Center this model at a residency program to provide training opportunities to resident physicians that can have an exponential impact as they take this model to their future places of employment.
- Create a scalable model that other residency programs can use to fulfill their group visit and intensive therapeutic lifestyle change hours as a part of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) Lifestyle Medicine Residency Curriculum (LMRC)

CASE DESCRIPTION



RP is a 68-year-old male with past medical history of hypertension, hyperlipidemia, obstructive sleep apnea, pre-diabetes, and obesity

Pre-program biometrics:

- Weight: 244 lbs
- BP (average of last 3): 144/72
- Lipids: total cholesterol 152, LDL 90 (10/30/24)
- A1c: 6.3 (7/12/24), 6.5 (10/30/24)



INTERVENTION AND TIMELINE



- Patients with chronic diseases were recruited from Swedish clinics into a specific Swedish-YMCA cohort – we initially enrolled 8 patients from Swedish clinics and 5 from non-Swedish clinics
- Schedule (outlined in table 1)
- RP participated in all four physician-led LM SMA and weekly YMCA coach-led Wellness for Life sessions
- Patients in the program gained insight into tracking, goal setting, nutrition, physical activity, sleep, stress reduction and mindfulness through the Wellness for Life curriculum and these were reinforced during the LM SMA with a chronic disease management lens and an opportunity to address individual care (medication adjustments, labs, etc).
- RP also engaged in YMCA resources (pool to complete water aerobics, gym to increase walking distance)
- RP was also enrolled in physical therapy during the time of this program to rehab from ankle surgery

Event Date	Session	Start Time	End Time	Session Topic
10/8/2024	1	11	12:30	Intro and orientation
10/15/2024	2	11	12	Goal Setting
10/22/2024	3	11	12	Nourishing the Body Part One
10/29/2024	4	11	12:15	Monthly Check-in and LM SMA 1 - review nutrition with focus on specific chronic conditions, pt check-in, set goals
11/5/2024	5	11	12	Physical Activity - Establishing a Routine
11/12/2024	6	11	12	Nourishing the Body Part Two
11/19/2024	7	11	12	Stress and Self Care
11/26/2024	8	11	12	Preparation Planning and Action
12/3/2024	9	11	12:15	Monthly Check-in and LM SMA 2 - review physical activity, stress, pt check-in, set goals
12/10/2024	10	11	12	Engineering a Supporting Environment
12/17/2024	11	11	12	Positive Self-Talk
1/7/2025	12	11	12:15	Monthly Check-in and LM SMA 3 - review community, positive self-talk pt check-in, set goals
1/14/2025	13	11	12	Sleep Hygiene
1/21/2025	14	11	12	All Foods Fit and Mindfulness
1/28/2025	15	11	12	Physical Activity : Fun and Forever
2/4/2025	16	11	12:15	Monthly Check-in and LM SMA 4 - review sleep, mindfulness pt check-in, set goals
2/11/2025	17	11	12:30	Final one - Sustaining your Progress and Forecasting your Future

Table 1: Schedule for integrated shared medical appointment sessions with YMCA Wellness for Life sessions

OUTCOMES



Post-program biometrics:

- Weight: 225 lbs (5/21/25), 230 lbs (3/18/25)
- BP (average of last 3): 126/76
- Lipids: total cholesterol 141, LDL 84 (3/13/25)
- A1c: 6.1 (12/2/24), 6.0 (3/13/25)

“I do think the Shared Medical Appointment model helped me make my journey more specific. The presentations by the doctors on nutritional issues were particularly helpful. Additionally, the group participation was powerful. Knowing that others were on a similar journey and that they were willing to share ideas and successes as well as challenges was empowering.”



CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

- This patient represents the potential success of this model for a motivated and engaged patient. He had a 19lb weight loss, 18-point improvement in his systolic blood pressure, improvement in his A1c from 6.5 to 6.0 (no second elevated A1c in DM range) and mild change in LDL from 90 to 84
- Behavior change is hard, support is important – partnering with established community programs helps provide the multidisciplinary approach that helps with success by providing coach, community, and infrastructure (gym, cooking classes)
- Partnering with an established community organization such as the YMCA minimizes any additional FTE needs and connects patients with often underutilized community resources
- Out of the 8 patients from Swedish clinics recruited into this study, the patients recruited from our primary residency clinic had the most engagement and success
- Specificity is important – recruiting patients from one clinic site into a cohort led by a PCP at the same clinic may help with recruitment and medical management, recruiting patients with the same chronic disease may help with LM SMA discussions and community building

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Thank you