

Community Health Corner: Well Women Series

K-STATE
Research and Extension
Family and Consumer Sciences

Leader's Guide

2024 Annual Lesson Series



Five-issue fact sheet series to build health literacy and improve health among women in Kansas

A Message to Leaders:

This Community Health Corner: Well Women series was prepared by Stephanie Gutierrez and Elaine Johannes in cooperation with the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC) and KDHE's Maternal and Child Health Section. Each four-page fact sheet, in English or Spanish, features an article on:

- A. an important women's health topic;
- B. vaccination facts and resources; and
- C. steps women can take to make the most of their well-women doctor's visits. Those steps are described in KDHE's Well-Woman Visits Toolkit at: www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15433/Well-Woman-Toolkit-for-Communities-PDF

This leader's guide equips you to initiate and lead facilitated discussions around key questions. Through facilitated discussion, participants will learn health information, build health literacy, share health care experiences (by choice), and support accessible, appropriate, available healthcare for women in the community. Though you may not be a healthcare professional, by discussing information and sharing ideas sparked by this five-part fact sheet series, you are leading improvements in health literacy and well-being for women.

Introduce each fact sheet separately or as a set to facilitate group discussions. You may also include information from KDHE's Well-Women Visits resources (<https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/457/MCH-Integration-Toolkits>). Before you facilitate a discussion, explore the healthcare resources in your community that serve women over various ages, backgrounds, insurance status, languages, and health literacy levels. Invite local healthcare professionals to attend the

discussion(s) you hold. Their ideas and support for women's health, and their involvement in campaigns and community efforts to improve that health, are important.

When planning the facilitated discussion about women's health and wellness, develop an adjustable 1.5-hour agenda. As you facilitate the discussion, listen more than speak, facilitate more than present, and invite more than "calling on" participants to share. In a facilitated discussion, all participants play a role in moving the discussion forward. The facilitator's job, after setting the place and time, is to lead a process that allows all parties to participate equitably while also keeping the parties focused upon the topic and goals for the facilitation.

Though not required, it would ideal if the group develops a list of opportunities for community organizations to increase their health literacy for women's health. Later in this leader's guide is a list of observances that can be used to conduct campaigns, hold town meetings, and educate women. Before the facilitated discussion concludes, be sure to collect the evaluation surveys and return them to your local extension office or Family and Consumer Sciences agent. At the close, be prepared to have participants linger to offer support for community campaigns that improve women's health and for participants to informally share their healthcare experiences. These experiences are best shared in private, confidential settings and not in earshot of others.

Again, thank you for your leadership. Let your local Extension professional or us know how we can help.

— *Stephanie Guterrez and Elaine Johannes*

Objectives for the Well Women series:

- » Participants will understand and use health information.
- » Participants will plan to make well-informed, confident decisions for their healthcare.
- » Participants will be more confident in their interactions with healthcare providers.

- » Participants will be part of community campaigns that improve the health literacy and well-being of all women.

Intended Audience:

- » Women over age 17 in the community
- » Healthcare professionals who serve women over age 17 in the community
- » Women and their family members
- » Community decision makers

Preparation:

- » Read this leaders guide (MF3629) and the five fact sheets (MF3628A-E).
- » Decide how best to facilitate a 1.5-hour discussion of fact sheet content with focus on well woman visits, access to healthcare, and health literacy. Facilitation includes:
 - setting an expectation for discussion, listening, taking turns; providing some opening comments information about women's health (use the fact sheet topics to initiate discussion); leading the discussion focused on key questions; conclusion. At the end, allow time for ideas for opportunities and projects to support health literacy and improve women's health in the community.
- » Make copies of some or all of the fact sheets so that participants have them during discussion.
- » Have flipchart paper, markers, and/or notepads for note-taking. If multiple groups meet at one time, make sure that each group has supplies for taking notes and reporting back to the full group.

Topics for each fact sheet are:

Issue 1: Well Women – Invitation to be a health promoter; Vaccination – How do vaccinations work; Making the most of well visits - Before a healthcare appointment

Issue 2: Well Women – Healthy heart; Vaccination – how do vaccines reach you; Making the most of well visits - Your provider won't judge you

Issue 3: Well Women – Self-care and Mental Health; Vaccination -young and pregnant women; Making the most of well visits - During the appointment, ask questions and speak out

Issue 4: Well Women – Screenings, pelvic exam; Vaccination – credible vs misinformation; Making the most of well visits - If you run out of time during an appointment

Issue 5: Well Women - Dental health; Vaccination – Lifespan and older women; Making the most of well visits - Continue advocating for yourself

Background:

Improved health literacy among all Kansans is an objective of the State Health Improvement Plan – Healthy Kansans 2030 (www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/25498/Healthy-Kansans-2030-State-Health-Improvement-Plan-PDF). Being health literate means having access to accurate and usable health information that is culturally appropriate, easily understandable, that empowers people to remove barriers, and that supports health and well-being. The nation's Healthy People 2030 plan recognizes that:

Personal health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Organizational health literacy is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Benefits of Health Literacy:

- » Increase the use of preventive health care.
- » Fewer unneeded emergency room visits.
- » Fewer preventable stays in the hospital and readmissions.

- » Fewer dosing errors.
- » Help patients better manage their chronic conditions such as diabetes, high cholesterol, hypertension, and HIV/AIDS.
- » Improve health outcomes.
- » Enhance all six aims of quality improvement: safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable.
- » Increase patient satisfaction.

Organizations can improve women's health literacy and their empowerment:

- » Use clear signage in and directions to healthcare facilities that have been tested with patients.
- » Create and implement easy-to-navigate patient portals.
- » Use plain language health information available in commonly spoken languages that has been tested with your target audience for cultural sensitivity and reading level, so that people can understand the first time they read it.
- » Recruit bilingual staff and qualified interpreters for patients with a language preference other than English.
- » Provide forms and educational materials in languages other than English that have been tested with patients.
- » Use simple forms that are easy to complete.
- » Set up telephone systems that are patient-friendly.
- » Provide clear directions for taking medication.

(Source: <https://www.hrsa.gov/about/organization/bureaus/ohe/health-literacy#:~:text=Personal%20health%20literacy%20is%20the,actions%20for%20themselves%20and%20others>)

Facilitate the Discussion:

Use this sample script to guide discussion. You may need to adapt it to suit your audience, but use the facts, figures, and discussion points to help equip the audience to improve their health literacy.

Opening Comments:

Kansas ranks 33rd among states in women, ages 18-44, getting regular wellness checkups. Nationally, 82% of women have well-woman visits, while 72% of Kansas women have regular well-women visits. Top reasons why women should have an annual well-women exam are:

- » Learn about birth control
- » Cancer screening
- » Vaccinations
- » Health screening
- » Issues with menstrual period
- » Sexually transmitted infection screening
- » Relationship with drugs, tobacco, and alcohol
- » Weight control
- » Concerns about sex
- » Pre-conception counseling
- » Depression screening
- » Questions about healthy relationships

(The handout is available at: www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15432/Well-Woman-Education-Flier-PDF)

(Data source: https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/well_woman_visit_women/state/KS)

One of the ways we might improve the number of women getting well-women visits and improving their overall health is by supporting their health literacy. According to Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Healthy Kansans 2030 plan for the state's health, health literacy is more than the ability to read and understand labels or track health records. Health literacy means having access to accurate and usable health information that is culturally appropriate, easily understandable, and empowers communities to remove barriers and support the foundations of a quality of life. There are ways that women can improve their health literacy, and organizations can help all women build confidence in making their healthcare discussions.

Expectations:

I am glad to facilitate this 1.5-hour discussion around a few key questions that are focused on women's health and health literacy. As I facilitate, I'll look to you to participate, share healthcare experiences if you choose to do so, and contribute ideas for opportunities to improve health literacy and wellness among women in our community. I encourage you to use the topics on the fact sheet(s) to further our discussion and inspire potential campaign ideas. Let's look through the fact sheet(s), which are organized by a women's health topic on the first page, and vaccination and well-women's visit advice on pages 2 and 3. Any questions?

Key Questions to Guide Discussion

Let's get underway. . .

1. Back to the ranking of Kansas for well-women visits, why aren't more women getting these visits done? Any ideas about well-woman visits in our community?
2. How could women more effectively access, prepare for, and participate in regular healthcare visits?
3. Are there barriers to women being more informed and confident when it comes to their health and healthcare?
4. Are there opportunities for women to become more informed and confident when it comes to their health and healthcare?
5. How could our community improve the confidence and health literacy of women of all ages and backgrounds?

Opportunities to Support Health Literacy and Improved Health:

- » Women's Health Month is May, as is Mother's Day. (KDHE has annual campaign materials.)
- » International Women's Day is in March each year.
- » Monthly Observances for Women's Health are listed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/women/observances/index.htm>

Conclusion:

It's important to stay on time even if all key questions have not been discussed. So as the time draws to an end, complete the last round of discussion, summarize what was heard during the time, and thank all for participating. If there were ideas for community campaigns or projects, list those on flipcharts for everyone to see and offer to discuss these with people who are interested at another time. Remind participants to complete and return the evaluation surveys. Additionally, reinforce the expectation of confidentiality for those who shared healthcare experiences and encourage those with healthcare concerns to consult with their healthcare provider(s).

Resources:

Abramson, A., (May 27, 2023). Embarrassed to Talk to Your Doctor? 5 Tips for Addressing Awkward Topics. <https://www.onemedical.com/blog/healthy-living/embarrassed-talk-your-doctor-5-tips-addressing-awkward-topics/>

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) (Aug. 2, 2022). Before your appointment: questions are the answer. www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/ask-your-doctor/questions-before-appointment.html.

American Academy of Family Physicians (2023). Getting the most out of your doctor appointment. National Institute of Health, <https://familydoctor.org/tips-for-talking-to-your-doctor/>

America's Health Rankings (2023). Health of Women and Children, Well-Women Visits; https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/well_women_visit_women/state/KS

Ginther, D., K.; Hurd, G.; Wedel, X.; Becker, T.; Oslund, P. (Feb. 2022) Status of Women in Kansas Center for Science, Technology & Economic Policy (CSTEP), Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas. <https://ipsr.ku.edu/publicat/StatusofWomeninKansas2021.pdf>

Gurmankin Levy, A., Scherer, A., Zikmund-Fisher, B., Larkin, K., Barnes, G., and Fagerlin, A. (2018). Prevalence of and Factors Associated with Patient Nondisclosure of Medically Relevant Information to Clinicians. JAMA Network Open Network, Nov. 2018; 1(7):e185293. doi:10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.5293

Harvard University Health Letter (Nov. 1, 2021). Are you too embarrassed to go to the doctor? www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/are-you-too-embarrassed-to-go-to-the-doctor

Hoyert, D., (2023) Maternal Mortality Rates in the United States, 2021. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2021/maternal-mortality-rates-2021.htm>

Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) (2023). Well Woman Wellness Visits – toolkit, campaign, flyer. <https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15433/Well-Woman-Toolkit-for-Communities-PDF>

MedlinePlus (Aug. 8, 2022) Make the most of your doctor visit. <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000860.htm>

National Institute on Aging (Feb. 2020). Talking With Your Doctor: What Should I Ask My Doctor During a Checkup? 1.17min. video at: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-should-i-ask-my-doctor-during-checkup>

National Institute of Health website (Aug. 8, 2022). Talking to your doctor. www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/talking-your-doctor. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-should-i-ask-my-doctor-during-checkup>

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Community Health Corner: Well Woman Series

Thank you for taking time to participate in our program. Please take a moment to let us know what you gained from the program. Your participation is in this survey voluntary. The information you provide will only be used to evaluate our program and your identity will be kept confidential. Respond to the questions below.

Date and location of presentation: _____

My county of residence: _____

Gender: Female Male Non-binary Other Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity: American Indian/Native American Bi-racial White Asian
 Hispanic or Latino Black/African American Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 Other Prefer not to respond

Age: 5-17 years 18-29 years 30-59 years 60+ years Prefer not to answer

1. As a result of this program, did you learn something new about women's health, wellness and health literacy?

Yes No A little

2. Did this program help you understand the importance of health literacy for women?

Yes No A little

3. Did this program help you identify ways to use health information beyond simply understanding it?

Yes No A little

4. Did this program help you feel more confident during well-woman visits?

Yes No A little

5. Did this program help you consider ways that could improve access to healthcare for women in your community?

Yes No Don't know

6. Do you have an annual well-woman healthcare visit?

Yes No Don't know

Feel free to share why or why not: _____

7. Do you have health insurance that pays for a well-woman healthcare visit?

Yes No Don't know

Evaluation continues on next page.

