

Group Classes, Giveaways, and a Garden: Part 1

*Redwood Community Health Coalition
Promising Practice*

PROMISING PRACTICE OVERVIEW

RosaLee Kamper, OLE Health’s Director of Nutrition, Health Education and Perinatal Services (and Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN)) started at OLE five years ago. During that time, she has seen an evolution in preventative care, with the hiring of additional full time RDNs, a Garden and Culinary Wellness Educator, a general Health Educator and integration of three Perinatal Health Workers. OLE’s RDNs are the only bilingual outpatient RDNs in Napa County.

To increase fresh food access, OLE has had a free fruit and vegetable market for the past four years, inspiring others in the community to start their own. As OLE was starting to design their new South Napa Campus, patients expressed interest in seeing more real food. A garden and teaching kitchen were proposed, and there was unanimous agreement among patients.

Read more about the South Napa Campus work [here](#) and take a tour around the garden [here](#).

AIM

To increase patient knowledge of and access to healthy food through group classes, fresh fruit and vegetable giveaways, a teaching kitchen, and a community garden.

MEASURES

Currently OLE is measuring the number of attendees in group classes, with the goal of increasing fresh fruit and vegetable access and awareness of programs such as CalFresh. In the future OLE will measure changes in food security/access as well as fresh fruit and vegetable intake through pre and post patient surveys.

Name of Group Class/Program	Class Capacity
SnapEd Cooking/Food Demo	15-18
Diabetes Wellness	Up to 25
Living with Diabetes Support Group for Self-Management	15-25
Healthy Hearts	15-18
Teaching Kitchen (hands-on)	6-8
Garden	15-20*
*Haven’t had large group in garden yet, as they’re working on ADA accessibility first.	

Community Garden at South Napa Campus

Emily Newman – Garden & Culinary Wellness Educator



ACTIONS TAKEN

- Hired **RDNs and other staff**
- Started **Diabetes and Heart Health Classes** that providers can refer patients to, or patients can self-refer.
 - “Diabetes Wellness” class provides intro to pre-diabetes and diabetes, focusing on self-management education
 - “Living with Diabetes Support Group for Self Mgmt” - some patients have been coming for 10 years!
 - “Healthy Hearts” class is open to anyone with cardiovascular health issues
 - “SNAP-Ed” six-month cooking/food demo series provides patient nutrition education based on garden harvest items and bag of garden-grown produce to take home
- Identified **diabetes** as a high need chronic disease, **and food security** as the **biggest issue** to address (via. a two question validated screening tool).
- Started **fresh fruit and vegetable giveaway** every 3rd Friday with a food bank (now supplementing with food grown in the garden)
- Created **“Teaching Kitchen”** where patients learn to cook and can take a bag of veggies home (now supplementing with food grown in the garden)
- Built a **garden** (opened June 2019) with the following goals:
 - Address food security (teach pts how to grow in small spaces and link to resources in community)
 - Garden to plate (increase understanding of how to prepare food and the health benefits)
 - Horticultural therapy (addressing depression, anxiety, spectrum disorders, etc by being outside in nature)

RESULTS TO DATE

Group classes have been sustained for many years and continue to be well attended. Classes provide the health education patients need and a source of connection to other patients struggling with the same health issues. Classes are also a good way to connect patients with RDNs for one-on-one appointments and to resources both at the health center (such as CalFresh) and in the community.

The fresh food giveaway improves food access for patients with food insecurity and has spurred other giveaways to pop up throughout the county.

NEXT STEPS

Programs

Once ADA accessibility is completed in the garden, OLE plans to start several programs, like yoga, to make the garden more of a communal space. The goal is to get the entire family out into the garden, to learn about healthy food, self-sufficiency, and improve food access.

Partnerships

OLE is working with a shelter near the South Napa campus to have fruit and vegetables prepared by their clients in OLE’s kitchen. The prepared food would be brought to the shelter for consumption.

OLE is working with the staff, chef, and residents at Center Point Inc., an Adult Withdrawal Management and Residential Treatment Program in Napa County, to connect the organization to fresh food donations. One of OLE’s RDNs is consulting on how to prepare food that accommodates different client needs (e.g. pureed diet or soft food).