



Creating Policy, Systems, Environmental Change: Worksites

Hotel Helps Employees Make Better Beverage Choices

Intervention Summary

Activities were conducted in and prior to FFY15.

Employees will now notice healthy beverage options when attending safety/recognition luncheons at the Wyndham Hotel in Garden Grove. Prior to 2014, pitchers of soda and other sweetened beverages were offered regularly during employee events and placed in the lunch room. Access to water was not a priority. Now, fruit-flavored water is offered at the buffet table. In the employee lunch room you will see housekeeping staff frequently drinking water from the reverse osmosis water dispenser and reading Rethink Your Drink (RYD) recipe cards found in the NEOP displays.

The OC-NEOP Worksite Program partnered with staff from the hotel to find ways to create a workplace that supported access to water while lowering high soda consumption. In coordination with the Human Resources team, General Manager, Housekeeping Manager and the Executive Chef, nutrition education presentations began to be part of the employee luncheons. The RYD nutrition topic had a major impact. The amount of sugar found in popular beverages was shocking to both the housekeeping and management employees. This education motivated the worksite to find ways to improve access to healthy beverage options. The Executive Chef decided soda would no longer be offered during employees luncheons. To help support the chef's decision, the Human Resources staff decided to have fruit-flavored water offered as a healthy choice during the luncheons. The water cooler in the lunch room was replaced with a reverse osmosis water dispenser to cut down on cost, prevent injuries from employees that were trying to lift the 5-gallon water containers and ensure employees had access to hot and cold water. The availability of cups followed shortly.

The *Pacific Hospitality Group* (PHG) manages the Wyndham as well as three other hotels participating in the OC-NEOP Worksite Program. Working with the Human Resources Managers from each site and the PHG, the *Go for H₂O* tool from the *California Fit Business Kit* was implemented at each location to further support a healthy workplace. Now, every location has the reverse osmosis water dispensers (ROWD) and has received the RYD nutrition education

and displays with recipe cards to support healthy beverage options. Fruit-flavored water has also been offered during employee luncheons at all sites. On July 16th, the PHG was recognized as a distinguished healthy workplace during the *Champions for Change Summit*. An employee survey was conducted at two of the PHG hotels in August 2015. Of the 28 employees interviewed, 24 reported drinking water often or every day and only 6 drink soda often or every day. In September 2015, as part of *Housekeeping Recognition Week*, PHG provided refillable water bottles to all of the housekeeping staff. (See photo on page one)

Description of Barriers Encountered and Identified or Proposed Solutions

Promoting healthier beverage choices has not come without resistance. Some employees have requested that soda be offered during the luncheons and a soda machine in the employee lunch room at one site has been difficult to remove.

To help encourage healthier beverages, management staff is working to ensure ROWD are regularly maintained. The Human Resources Managers and Executive Chefs are interested in providing fruit-flavored water during all employee luncheons and possibly in the lunch room. NEOP staff will continue to provide nutrition education, healthy messages and other practical resources to help ensure employees take advantage of the healthier beverage options.

Future Directions/Sustainable Success

Short-term goals

- Provide management staff with sample policies supporting access to water
- Increase the number of posters and prompts that encourage employees to make healthier beverage choices
- Provide Executive Chefs with a variety of Rethink Your Drink recipe cards and NEOP recipe books for healthy beverage ideas

Long-term goals include

- Replace the soda machine at one of the hotels with a ROWD and possibly fruit-flavored water
- Ensure healthy beverage options are always available during employee luncheons
- Have a policy supporting access to water placed in the Health/Safety binder for PHG hotels located in Orange County and in other cities throughout California

Contact information about this Narrative

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Grant #: #13-20487

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This material was produced by the California Department of Public Health's Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch with funding from USDA SNAP-Ed, known in California as CalFresh. These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious food for better health. For CalFresh information, call 1-877-847-3663. For important nutrition information, visit www.CaChampionsForChange.net.