VHA Healthy Teaching Kitchens

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What is HTK?

VA Nutrition and Food Service staff teach hands on and demo only cooking classes that are aimed at:

- increasing use of fresh foods
- increasing healthy food choices
- learning skills to progress toward personal health goals
Helping Veterans reduce or eliminate medications

- Improved quality of life
- Saves VA money
- Fewer hospital admissions
- Meds for diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, etc., do not cure, they only reduce the symptoms. Diet and exercise are the only way to “cure” these symptoms

- If a 55 year old Veteran gets off of Metformin and lives until 73 years old, this will save just under $12,000...not to mention money saved from a hospital visit the Veteran does not have to endure
  - This will purchase food for Reno, NV cooking classes for 59 years and 11 months
Success!!

- NFS Leadership strategic vision for HTK
  - A solid foundation was built with a very strong long term vision for the future
- Toolkit and SharePoint
  - Comprehensive guidance and continuing trainings available online
  - Anyone can learn!!
- Demystify the cooking process
  - Empowering Veterans to take control of their own health
Why Does it Work?

**Chefs are the new rock stars!**
- Great demand for Healthy Cooking
- Veterans want to cook but many don’t know how to start
- Many Veterans feel trapped
  - How do you get healthy but still rely on restaurant and processed foods?
- Healthy food can taste good
  - “Healthy food” and “Healthy recipes” are often not the types of foods that our Veterans want to eat
- Many Veterans are low income
  - Cooking at home with whole fresh foods is cheaper than eating out
- We have the opportunity to redefine healthy foods as tasty foods that people want to eat
Looking to the Future

- Questionnaires and evaluations
  - Single Class and Series
- Qualitative Data
  - How often do you eat...?
  - How confident are you that you can...?
- Quantitative Data
  - Weight, BMI, HgbA1c
- This information will allow us to grow and tailor our program to better help Veterans meet their goals
THANK YOU

- QUESTIONS?