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Research and Planning Writing Assignment

Many people perceive heart disease to be a more salient issue for men than for women, yet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that heart disease is the leading cause of death in women in the United States. In fact, heart disease accounts for 1 in 5 female deaths, totaling around 299,578 deaths a year (CDC, 2019). Heart disease can take many forms, but the most common heart problem is coronary heart disease which affects 1 in 16 women aged 20 and older (CDC, 2019).

There are several factors that can put people at risk for heart disease, including high blood pressure, smoking, and high cholesterol: about half of the United States population has at least one of these risk factors (CDC, 2019). Nonetheless, only about 56% of women in the United States recognize that heart disease is their biggest threat to life (CDC, 2019). In older women, aged 60 and up, heart disease becomes an even greater threat as physical activity is limited for this group (Consultant, 2009). Furthermore, heart disease can be even harder to detect in elderly women due to the lack of activity in their lives. The symptoms are often more subtle and can manifest themselves differently than in younger women, leading many elderly women to not realize they have a heart disease (Consultant, 2009).

With this in mind, it is critical that Pardee Hospital in Hendersonville, NC begin to raise awareness for heart disease in elderly women and increase our efforts to treat those affected by heart disease. This is especially important in this area as Hendersonville continues to grow into a budding retirement community. Thus, I propose a strategic plan that will help Pardee accomplish this goal. Naturally, our largest audience is women in Henderson County, however not all women are our target. Since heart disease in women begins as early as age 20, our first public is women age 20-40 as they are most able to make lifestyle changes to reduce their chances of heart

disease. A second public we need to emphasize is the gym/exercise network in Hendersonville. There are many local exercise gyms in town that locals are loyal to and visit frequently that can further help raise awareness. The last public we must target are doctors, specifically in the Pardee system.

This campaign will reach these publics in several key ways as part of the campaign. First, our social media team will work to create poignant and attention-grabbing posts that will be posted across Pardee's social media pages and our website. Facebook, though, will be our main focus, as 75% of regular Facebook users are women, with 79% of people on Facebook falling between our target age range of 20-40 (Chen, 2020). Instagram will be a secondary focus, with women making up 43% of users (more than men), 67% of users falling between 18-29, and another 47% between 30-49 (Chen, 2020).

Reaching the local gyms and Pardee network doctors will work in tandem. We will partner with local gyms, such as the Pump House Fitness and Flex Fitness, to put up fliers and create exercise programs specifically designed for keeping heart disease in women at bay. Despite exercise being one of the best preventions of heart disease, these gyms do not discuss this with members. Additionally, if a woman sees a Pardee network doctor to have her blood pressure or cholesterol checked, or to seek help in quitting smoking, the patient will receive a 10-20% discount on membership or classes at a participating local gym. We selected these three health concerns as they are the three greatest risk factors contributing to heart disease (CDC, 2019). Doctors are tasked with serving people's health needs and Pardee network doctors who participate in this campaign by posting fliers, seeing women for the aforementioned health concerns, etc. will receive an office-wide bonus. We will create pamphlets that outline the different programs available and the benefits each gym offers so that patients can make an informed decision on which gym they prefer, as well.

With half of women not realizing that heart disease is their leading cause of death, it is critical that Pardee Hospital continue to be a leading health organization and advocate for women in the Henderson County area. Pardee has worked tirelessly as a non-profit since 1953 to serve Hendersonville and become a leading health organization in the county today. We must continue this legacy by raising awareness for a quiet killer in our community of women. By reaching women between 20-40 years of age, local gyms, and Pardee network doctors, we believe that Pardee can also become the leading health organization for women with heart disease.

My team and I look forward to hearing further ideas and working with you to create the best strategic plan going forward!

References

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