



Health Improvement Through Employee Training and Control II



Fall 2013

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What is the study all about?

by Jeff Dussetchleger

Health Improvement Through Employee Control II (HITEC II), also known as the UConn DOC study, is a continuation of a study begun seven years ago, called, "HITEC I." In HITEC I, the health and wellness of correctional staff was assessed along with two different methods of health promotion interventions. HITEC II is an intervention study that builds on the findings of our previous work and consists of a mentoring program for new recruits and two different participatory intervention activities. The study is planned to run until August 2016.

An interesting finding about the health of correctional staff was that, while new officers began their career physically fit, within their first 3 years on the job their health deteriorated to a level similar to that of an officer who had been on the force for 15 or more years. Their rates of high blood pressure, obesity and depression were comparable to more experienced officers. These findings raised the questions, "why does this occur?" and, "can something be done in those first years that could help prevent this deterioration in health?"

To address these questions, HITEC II implements two interventions with new officers: a web-based education site that will provide information and self-paced learning modules about health and wellness, and a mentor program, which pairs a senior officer with a new officer. The mentor's role is not to teach the new officer the job but rather to assist the new officer to develop healthy ways of handling the stressors of the job.

HITEC I addressed health promotion in two ways: a top-down, "best practices" approach, and a participatory approach in which correctional officers designed the interventions. Because the participatory approach proved to be the better one, HITEC II is expanding on it. The officer-lead intervention program stays in place while a new approach is introduced. The new approach, "Kaizen," brings together correctional officers, facility management, and DOC management to address the issues of nutrition, fitness, on-the-job injury and ergonomics. They will work intensely for a few months to develop and implement a program to address each of the target areas.

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WHERE ARE THE MENTORS?



Bridgeport CC



Willard-Cybulski CI



Northern CI

So Far....

Facilities shown in these pictures are already implementing the mentoring program.



Hartford CC

FAST FACTS

35%

Percent participation in the mentoring program, combining the three facilities who have implemented the program.

60%

Percent of the eligible trainees still need mentors.

Mentoring Program Update

by Dana Farr

What is health mentoring? Mentoring in corrections has a long history; *health mentoring* in corrections is a new idea, aimed at making a difference in new officers' health and well-being during their first year on the job. The HITEC II Mentoring Program compares two approaches to health mentoring: the *standard* and the *personalized* approaches. Both groups engage in brief physical tests, fill out questionnaires, and have access to customized health information. Additionally, graduates from designated training academy classes – the *personalized* followup groups – receive personal Mentors, correctional officers who are willing to share their time, experience, and knowledge with new officers.

Mentors help their Mentees to develop personal goals, career goals, and health/fitness goals, and they help their Mentees to reach these goals by providing encouragement, being positive role models, offering guidance, and sometimes agreeing to work together on similar goals. Mentors are not supervisors, evaluators, or trainers; rather, they are like trusted friends and confidantes. Mentors receive training and ongoing supervision from HITEC II staff at the UConn Health Center.

Thanks to the 48 officers, so far, who have volunteered to become Mentors in several facilities across the state, the Mentor Program is off to a great start.

About half of the new officers who joined the HITEC II study now have mentors. However, we still need more volunteers, and Mentor recruitment and training continues.

If you think you might be interested in becoming a Mentor, please contact Dana Farr at the UConn Health Center at dfarr@uchc.edu or (860) 679-3857 for more information.



Cheshire Design Team Update

by Dana Farr

What Exactly Is a *Design Team*?

If you work at the Cheshire CI, you have probably seen or heard the term, “Design Team,” on a poster, at roll call, or in conversations among coworkers. If you ever wondered what this mysterious team was up to, but were afraid to ask, please read on!

The HITEC II study is comparing two participatory, officer-driven approaches to improving the health of correctional officers and staff: Kaizen Teams and Design Teams. The *Design Team* is open to any non-supervisory staff member who is interested in improving the health and well-being of correctional staff, concentrating on four main areas: working environment, nutrition, fitness, and safety. The team meets every other Thursday from 2:30 pm. to 3:30 pm. (pay weeks) in the Cheshire CI Captain’s Office. Design Teams control the prioritization, scope, sequence, and assessment of the interventions they choose to implement.

So far, the Cheshire Design Team has met five times and has identified several major themes: stress, air quality/noise, and ergonomics (standing & boots). A weight loss program is also on the agenda. The Team discusses problems and concerns, brainstorms possible solutions, and makes proposals to the Site Steering Committee (the SSC, made up of interested staff at all levels). Our first SSC meeting occurred on 9/30/2013.

The officers who have volunteered to participate, so far, have brought a great deal of expertise, insight, and energy into the Design Team process; thanks to these dedicated officers, we have already made several proposals to the SSC and have set some initiatives into motion.

If you think you might be interested in being a part of the Design Team, please join us! Come to the Captain’s Office at 2:30pm on one of our meeting days and find out what it’s all about.

DESIGN TEAM CONCERNS



Cheshire Correctional Facility

The design team at Cheshire has identified stress, air quality/noise, and ergonomic (standing & boots) as major issues that need to be addressed in their facility.



Stress from Work



Indoor Air Quality and Noise— Health and Safety



Boots/Standing—Ergonomic Issues

Corrigan- Radgowski Kaizen Event Update

By: Winnie Chin

Have you ever heard of the word Kaizen or Kaizen event? If you have not heard of this term this is a good place to start.

A Kaizen event is often a very focused and structured process that tries to engage a team of workers on a targeted work related health problem. Some key features of this even include: listing and identifying specific goals, an accelerated time frame to reach the goal, and ‘at the table’ involvement of key managerial personnel and workforce^{17,18}. These events are recognized not only for their short-term effectiveness, but for the persistent change of identified issues.

The HITEC-II study uses the Kaizen even as an officer-driven approach to identification of health problems in the work place. Currently, a Kaizen team has been created in the Corrigan-Radgowski Correctional Facility. The participants of the evens have chosen Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and Noise Levels as areas that are most in need of improvement.

A Walkthrough has been done, led by Correctional Officers with two Certified Industrial Hygienists, one Certified Professional Ergonomist, and HITEC 2 Research Staff.

Surveys to assess building areas of highest concern for IAQ and Noise Levels have been distributed and results will be discussed in the upcoming event on Oct 21, 2013.



Corrigan Radgowski Correctional Facility

DOC Family Night- HITEC II Participation

By: Mazen El Ghaziri

A group of the HITEC II Team participated at the new recruits Family Night that took place at the Maloney Center for Training and Staff Development on Friday September 27, 2013.

The purpose of the event was to share with the family members of the new recruits the important role they play in their position as Correctional Officers. The evening involved a potluck dinner and series of addresses by the Commissioner, James E. Dzurenda, Deputy Commissioner, Critical Support Team, Military Peer Support Team, and it concluded with a presentation by Dr. Martin Cherniack. The speakers focused on the importance of family support and healthy lifestyle for correctional officers, highlighting the stresses and risk associated with job and the resources available for the new recruits as they are moving shortly into the “on the job training”.

Dr. Cherniack introduced the HITEC II team members and presented to the new recruits and their families the goals of the HITEC II project, a brief overview of key preliminary findings, the benefits and the importance of the project given the potential occupational risks associated with being a Correctional Officer.

The HITEC II team had two booths set up during the event for blood pressure and handgrip measurement for the new recruits and their families. The HITEC II team also provided information and explanation about the HITEC II project.

CO Safety Tips!

By: Mazen El Ghaziri

Here are some basic safety tips for you to keep in mind to help prevent work related injury related to inmate incidents:

- Be always aware and alert of your surrounding.
- Maintain professional relationship and boundaries.
- Make sure that you know your safety policies and procedures.
- Make sure to report and document any safety related incidents.
- Make sure you have your protective gear on you (such as gloves, flash light, handcuffs, radio holder, key holder, duty belt, etc).
- Attend safety training as needed and ask for help and assistance once you need it.



Dining Out the Healthier Way

By: Christina Mignano

Restaurant and takeout meals are almost always less healthy than those you can make at home. For times when you are not prepared here are a few tips:

- **Look for keys words**

Such as; “grilled”, “broiled”, “baked”, or “steamed” rather than “sautéed” or “fried”. If the menu does not have healthier options ask, restaurants often will provide special orders.

- **Order the “healthy, light, or low-fat” options on the menu**

Many restaurants now list calorie and nutrition content of their meals on the menu. Others provide this information online so check out their website before ordering.

- **Eat half**

Portion sizes are often 4 times or more what a healthy portion should be. If you are someone who will continue to eat food on the plate even after you are full, ask for a to-go box at the start of your meal and pack half of your meal to take with you.

- **Don’t spend calories on beverages**

Beverage calories count just as much towards weight gain as food calories, but they will not keep full for as long. Stick with water, diet sodas/teas, or unsweetened tea.



Physical Activity Facts

By: Christina Mignano

Here are some important physical activity facts for you to remember:

- People who are physically active save about \$500 per year in healthcare cost.
- Studies have shown that for every hour of walking, life expectancy may increase by two hours.
- Research has shown that doing aerobic or a mix of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities 3-5 days a week for 30-60 minutes provides mental health benefits such as reduce risk of tension, anxiety, depression and anger and helps you to better manage stress.
- Physical activity increases the flow of oxygen to the brain, resulting in improved mental acuity and memory.
- Regular physical activity can improve sleep quality and boost energy levels.
- Physical activity can improve ones ability to do daily activities and prevent injuries
- Physical activity can improve self-image and self-esteem.

