



## HOW TO CREATE A BLOOD PRESSURE SELF-MONITORING STATION

Support the health of employees and others with a blood pressure self-monitoring (BPSM) station. One in three adults has high blood pressure. Half of these have it under control. Many more have high blood pressure but do not know it. High blood pressure can lead to a sudden heart attack, stroke, heart failure, kidney disease, vision loss and sexual dysfunction.

A BPSM station is an opportunity to raise awareness and may even save lives. A small space reminds and encourages individuals to check their blood pressure regularly. This is a proven way to better manage blood pressure. A BPSM station can make a real difference. How? Studies show that individuals who self-monitor their blood pressure and receive educational information are more likely to:

- gain knowledge and interest in their health
- make changes in their lifestyle
- lower their blood pressure readings
- have confidence in monitoring blood pressure
- talk more with their healthcare provider
- follow doctor's recommendations and take medications as prescribed

Self-monitoring works best when users talk with their doctors about their readings and when they get educational support. A BPSM station is NOT a substitute for medical care or doctor visits.

### 6 STEPS TO CREATE YOUR STATION

First, participate in the training webinar or listen to the recorded session so you will know plans and expectations. Next, talk with your office coworkers about the training and materials. Then, follow these steps to create your BPSM station.

#### 1. Find a space

- The best space is a private, quiet corner. Users will need to sit calmly for five minutes without conversations or distractions.

#### 2. Set it up

- A small table or desk will fit a brochure rack and materials, the BP monitor and a place for the user to rest their arm at heart level. An electrical outlet is ideal but not necessary, as the monitor also runs on batteries.
- A comfortable chair with back support allows the user to sit and rest their arm on the table.
- Place the large wall sign above the table.
- Put the sign-in sheet on a clipboard.
- Put take-home handouts in the brochure rack: mirror clings, BP Tracker, etc.

#### 3. Promote it

- Adapt media release #1 (announcement) for your site location and send to local news outlets.
- Schedule an open house to encourage the public to stop by. A few weeks prior, adapt media release #2 (open house invitation) and send to local news outlets.
- Hand out promotional flyers at all Extension meetings, events and activities.
- Post on your organization's Facebook page and website.

#### **4. Encourage learning**

- Guide station users, when needed.
  - Ask them to sign in.
  - Show them the sign on how to get the most accurate BP reading.
  - Give them take-home handouts.
  - Tell them it is important to share their readings with their healthcare provider.
  - Invite them back to check their BP often.
- Check out videos and more resources at [www.targetbp.org](http://www.targetbp.org) and [www.millionhearts.hhs.gov](http://www.millionhearts.hhs.gov)
- For help managing high blood pressure, users may sign up for Check. Change. Control.<sup>®</sup> at [www.heart.org/ccc](http://www.heart.org/ccc).

#### **5. Keep it going**

- Talk with your coworkers to be sure they know the station is for their use. Ask them to promote it with their audiences and to help at the open house event.
- Keep an eye on the Sign In Sheet. Fill the brochure rack as needed.
- Be sure the monitor and batteries are working.
- Questions? Contact Elaine Bowen at [epbowen@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:epbowen@mail.wvu.edu) or 304-293-8584.

#### **6. Take it another step**

- Encourage healthy habits to help manage blood pressure:
  - Have healthy food and beverage choices at the office and program events.
  - Walk and be active.
- Sign up for the American Heart Association's Check. Change. Control. online program at [www.heart.org/ccc](http://www.heart.org/ccc). Use the code "WVCCC". Contact Tim Lewis at [tim.lewis@heart.org](mailto:tim.lewis@heart.org).
- Participate in community health events, such as the heart walk and health fairs.

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