

Monday, Apr 02, 2018

OU teams with Pontiac community partners on mindful eating

A new healthy eating program called “Choose Mindful on the Go!” is launching at [St. Joseph Mercy Oakland](#) (SJMO) hospital in the City of Pontiac.

The new program is a color-coded roadmap to choosing healthier foods throughout the day, so that making healthier choices becomes second nature, allowing everyone who visits the hospital and eats in the cafeteria to make empowered, inspired, and healthy choices.

“This partnership strengthens our ability to transform the Pontiac community into a healthier, more mindful place,” said [Jennifer Lucarelli, Ph.D.](#), associate professor of interdisciplinary health sciences at Oakland University and chairperson for the Healthy Pontiac, We Can! coalition.

Building upon the Mindful by Sodexo program and on-going [SJMO cafeteria](#) improvements, new features developed with OU and Oakland County Health Division will help visitors to the cafeteria make smart, mindful food choices while living busy and active lifestyles. The new features include color coding Go! items that are healthier, educating, placing healthy options at eye level, promoting them in daily dishes and encouraging everyone to put their health first. OU and their community partners believe that the Choose Mindful on the Go! program will help St. Joseph and Sodexo reach their united health system pledge: To be a compassionate and transform healing presence within our communities.

“Saint Joseph Mercy Oakland uniquely understands the importance of encouraging health and wellness within the community,” said David E Bowman MPA, Director Community Health at SJMO. “By highlighting Mindful produce choices within our cafeteria, we are able to encourage healthy behavior that will translate into the general community outside of our cafeteria as well. The key to overall improved health is changing behavior through education. The Choose Mindful on the Go! Program achieves this goal through a practical, user-friendly approach that our service and Clinical staff can collectively support.”

Additional efforts recently completed in Pontiac include launching the grocery store friendly versions of healthy eating programs, increasing number of produce stands available for residents and an on-going discussion on ways to increase access to healthy food choices.

The Choose Mindful on the Go! healthy eating program and supporting campaign materials were made possible by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) grant awarded to Oakland University on behalf of Oakland County Health Division’s Healthy Pontiac, We Can! coalition. The grant aims to reduce chronic disease and make healthy living easier and more affordable in Pontiac.



Lisa Lewis, RD, CDE, at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland hospital in Pontiac helps introduce the new healthy eating program “Choose Mindful on the Go!” to hospital visitors.



Division staff members and Oakland University School of Health Sciences and Healthy Pontiac, We Can! representatives.

About Healthy Pontiac, We Can!

The Oakland County Health Division, under leadership of L. Brooks Patterson, formed the Healthy Pontiac, We Can! coalition in 2011 to help Pontiac residents gain access to healthy food, become active, and live tobacco free. The coalition includes a diverse group of primary and preventative healthcare professionals, mental health experts, human service agency specialists, educators, clergy, government leaders, and residents.

For more information, visit the Healthy Pontiac, We Can! website: <https://www.healthypontiac.org>