

# Bariatric surgery performance improvement role of support group meetings in weight loss success

## Abstract

### Performance improvement goal

Increase the bariatric patient attendance to the monthly post-operative support group meetings to maintain and facilitate greater weight loss.

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## Introduction

North Shore University bariatric support group meetings are open for everyone to attend. It is held on a monthly basis primarily for patients who have undergone weight loss surgery.

When: Sterns Rehabilitation Center Conference Room.

Where: Every second Tuesday of every month from 6:30 PM–8:00PM.

An established methodology was used to achieve Performance Improvement. We utilized **Plan-Do Check-Act (PDCA)** Cycle as our performance improvement methodology.

## Plan

Provide support group topics that are relevant to daily lives.

Provide variations in support group meeting activity.

Promote the availability of the support group meetings.

Provide encouragement and monthly reminders to participate in the support group meetings.

## Do

Variety of topics: Guest speakers were invited on various topics pertaining to bariatric patients such as exercise, plastic surgery healthy eating, healthy chocolate, psychological issues, emotional and social issues.

### Organized different monthly activities:

Jul 2014- Jones Beach Annual Walk

Aug 2014- Weight Loss Wardrobe

Sep 2014- “Get Healthy America” health food store visit

Oct 2014- Denise Robinson: A sleeve patient’s success story

Nov 2014- Psychological issues dealing with weight loss surgery

Jan 2015- Problems to watch after bariatric surgery

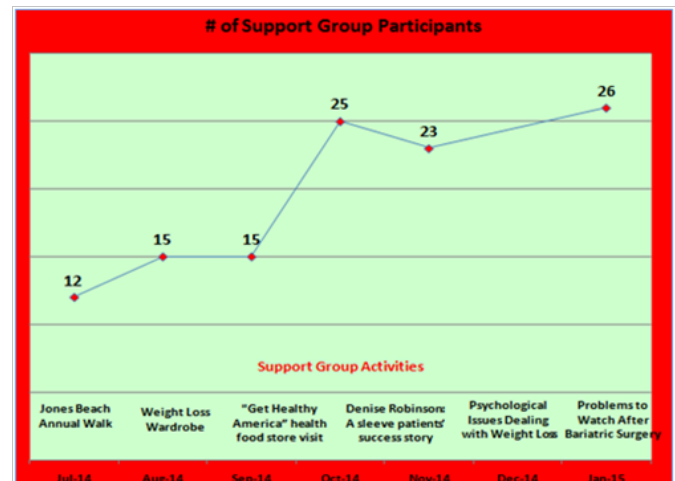
Monthly reminder phone calls to participants

Monthly Reminder emails

Incentives and free giveaways

Patient ambassadors

Taste test of new bariatric food products Weekly sharing of recipes (Figure 1).



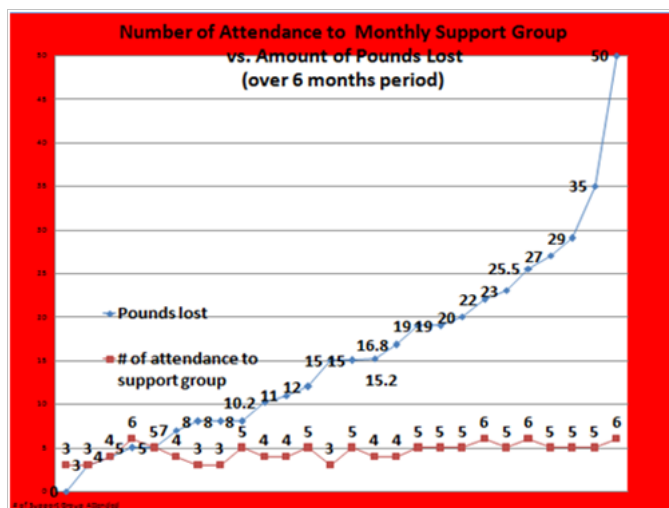
**Figure 1** Support group activities.

There was an increase in the number of support group participants over the seven month period. There was a total of 6 meetings held. The December meeting was cancelled due to weather condition. We doubled the number of participants from 12 in July 2014 to 26 in Jan 2015 (Figure 2).

Based on the data collected, there was a positive correlation between the amount of weight loss and the number of attendance to the monthly support group meetings. Participants who attended regularly to the monthly support group meetings achieved greater weight loss than those who did not.

## Check

During every support group meetings, attendance was taken and each participant’s weight was taken for monitoring. Feedbacks and suggestions were welcomed and again participation to the support group meetings was promoted.



**Figure 2** Number of attendance to monthly support group Vs. amount of pounds lost.

### Act

Took action based on the number of support group participants who attended and their feedback and suggestions. For example, the December 2014 meeting was cancelled due to weather conditions. Incorporated the lessons learned from the previous support group meeting and applied it to the next month's meeting.

### Results

There was an increase in the number of support group participants over the seven month period.<sup>1</sup> There were a total of 6 meetings held.

The December meeting was cancelled due to weather condition. We doubled the number of participants from 12 in July 2014 to 26 in Jan 2015.

Based on the data collected, there was a positive correlation between the amount of weight loss and the number of attendance to the monthly support group meetings.<sup>2</sup> Participants who attended regularly to the monthly support group meetings achieved greater weight loss than those who did not. There was a 412.7 pounds total weight loss. None of the participants gained weight during the seven month period. All of the participants maintained and achieved weight loss.

### Conclusion

We have achieved our performance improvement goal of increasing the bariatric patient attendance to the monthly post-operative support group meetings and maintained and facilitated greater weight loss.

### Acknowledgements

None.

### Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

### References

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