

A Healthy Approach to Improving Community Life

"Live Well Streator" promotes partnerships and better choices

Why go to the doctor if you don't have to?

That's the simple philosophy of a pilot program initiated by OSF HealthCare to change rural medical care delivery in Streator, IL. A principal component of that is the newly announced "Live Well Streator".

As Ellen Vogel, community health engagement program manager for OSF HealthCare - Center for Health - Streator, explains it - the initiative aims to involve the community in programs and efforts to live healthier lives.

"Look at different options and what makes them take better care of themselves", says Ellen Vogel, community health engagement program manager for OSF HealthCare, Center for Health - Streator. "And to be healthier, to make better choices about what they want to do with their life. But also to involve the families too, so it can go on for generations and generations."

Made up of a diverse group of community members, "Live Well Streator" wants the city to become a place where generations of people want to live because they can enjoy longer, healthier and happier lives.

Steering committee chair, Janette Strabala, who is also the regional director of operations for Heritage Operations Group - a long term care facility, says attaining the goals of "Live Well Streator" - to develop solutions that create new possibilities for healthier lives, can only succeed with community buy-in and support.

"When we can prove to them that this group and OSF is really putting out there to get the resources to community needs or, at least, help find the resources I think that will be beneficial," says Janette Strabala, "Live Well Streator steering committee chair."

Rallying citizens around an important cause is something with which Jack Dzuris is very familiar as the executive director for the Streator Area Chamber of Commerce. He's also the "Live Well Streator" co-chair.

He believes it's all about connecting people with what they need. That new potential can be unlocked when people are provided the chance to make better choices. He says a healthier Streator is a better Streator.

"I think this committee has done a great job trying to identify the resources that we're going to need and the problem that we want to try to work with," says Jack Dzuris, "Live Well Streator co-chair. "Obviously, you can't do all things for all people, but we're going to do the best that we can in certain areas."

The "Live Well Streator" steering committee is working at establishing action teams that will be charged with targeting specific health outcomes. Presently, two focus points have been identified.

"We want to focus on healthier weight - everyone to come up to have a healthier weight," says Vogel. And also substance abuse. We've seen that there are issues within our community and we would like to address those and see what ideas we can come together, get the community involved into making improvements."

In addition to Strabala and Dzuris, the steering committee includes Rene Barr, Josh Biros, Matthew Dean, Leslie Dougherty, Don Emmons, Vicki Gerberich, Jimmie Lansford, Amy Jo Mascal, Dr. Lisa Parker, Julie Ramza and several OSF HealthCare administrators.