

## Empowering Your Community with Tailored Events

Looking for a way to celebrate local hypertension control successes in your community while inspiring more patients and providers to work toward blood pressure control?

The announcement of the 2013 Hypertension Control Champions presents a great opportunity! Here are some ideas for recognizing and bringing together your community health system partners around this important issue.

**Tip:** You may want to consider planning an event during American Heart Month in February 2014 and National High Blood Pressure Education Month in May 2014!

### Event Ideas

- If there's an existing Hypertension Control Champion in your community, host a press event to announce the award. Invite local public health officials, policymakers, and health system partners to speak to the power of partnerships and the importance of community-wide high blood pressure control efforts.
  - Even if there is no local winner in your area, this is a great opportunity to work with community partners to identify other local success stories and share them publicly. Inspire organizations who are achieving control to enter the 2014 Hypertension Control Challenge!
- Offer to co-host/plan a blood pressure screening event; invite staff from local health care practices to discuss their broader efforts to control high blood pressure. Be sure to include a way for participants to follow up with a health care professional if their blood pressure is high.
  - If you are aware of health disparities that might be barriers to care and engagement in your area, think about solutions to address them beforehand, such as ensuring that low-income facilities are represented, low-cost options are available, and treatment facilities are accessible using public transportation or after traditional business hours.
- Collaborate with local health care practices to conduct a provider training or sharing session. Discuss practices that we know are working to improve control rates, such as:

- [Choosing a hypertension protocol](#) and applying it consistently.
  - Monitoring data monthly to ensure patients with hypertension don't "fall through the cracks."
  - Revisiting the use of electronic health records to maximize their utility in capturing and tracking patients with hypertension.
  - Exploring opportunities to explain team-based care models to engage diverse health care professionals across a patient's life.
- Work with local hospitals, clinics, and health centers to add a Million Hearts® session to their roster of community education classes. It could focus on the importance of understanding high blood pressure and working with a health care professional to achieve control.
  - Reach out to the health education coordinator at your local faith institutions, adult education institutions, recreation centers, or YMCA/YWCA to incorporate Million Hearts® messages and materials on blood pressure control into current activities.
  - Organize a Million Hearts® team to participate in a local walk, run, or sports tournament.
  - Work with a local restaurant to host a "Million Hearts® Evening" or "Million Hearts® Luncheon" with a "tasting menu" of heart-healthy meals.
  - Ask your local library to set up a special exhibit or organize a special reading area with materials focused on blood pressure control and heart disease and stroke prevention.
  - Contact businesses in your community or state and challenge them to promote cardiovascular health awareness and action in the workplace.

**Tip:** For any event you might plan, consider engaging others dedicated to public health, such as federally qualified health centers, public health departments, pharmacies, community health workers, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Regional Office ([find a list here](#)).

## Planning Tools

Although these tools are not specifically related to events around hypertension or cardiovascular disease, the general steps outlined are applicable to any event.

- [General Event Planning Tips](#)
- [Plan Activities Guide](#)
- [Event Planning Guide](#)