A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program



Toolkit for Creating Cultures of Health through Healthy and Sustainable Eating

Prepared by:

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Clinical Scholars is a national leadership program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation led by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Learn more about RWJF's Leadership for Better Health programs by visiting: rwjf.org/leadershipforbetterhealth

ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

This toolkit can be used to develop educational and practical projects, to recognize access to healthy food, as a fundamental aspect of physical and mental wellbeing, and more broadly as a human rights issue.

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Toolkit for Creating Cultures of Health through Healthy and Sustainable Eating

We aim to work the wicked problem of achieving a healthy plate in the Puerto Rican diet, with particular emphasis on fruit and vegetable consumption. This goal faces the seemingly insurmountable hurdles of food insecurity, recently famous natural disasters, and the less well-recognized disasters of centuries-old colonial relations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 16 million disability adjusted life years and 2.8% of deaths worldwide are attributable to low fruit and vegetable consumption. Furthermore, insufficient intake of fruit and vegetables is estimated to cause around 14% of gastrointestinal cancer deaths, about 11% of ischemic heart disease deaths and about 9% of stroke deaths globally. In 2011, the Harvard School of Public Health launched its Healthy Eating Plate, an updated riposte to the USDA's My Plate based on the best available scientific evidence. This visual representation of a balanced diet designates half the plate, or 50% of the diet, to fruits and vegetables. Contrast that to the information about the Puerto Rican diet in the latest available document of the Department of Health (Rodríguez, 2014) 48.1% of people consume one (1) or less portions of fruit a day, and 7.3% of people consume no fruit at all every day. Furthermore, 49.9% of Puerto Ricans consume less than two (2) portions of vegetables a day, and 24.2% consume less than one (1) portion a day. In 2012, the age-adjusted rates of death per 100,000 inhabitants for cancer, heart disease and stroke were 124.3, 117.6, and 31.8.

Education, food and empowerment

WHO defines Health Promotion as the process that allows people to increase control over the determinants of health and, consequently, improve it. Including as one of its functions the development of personal skills for health by providing the information and tools necessary to improve the knowledge, skills and competencies needed for the population to exercise greater control over their own health. To address the development of a healthy plate in the Puerto Rican diet, as well as within the socioeconomic conditions of the Puerto Rican family, we developed an interdisciplinary educational program for the students and staff of the Universidad Ana G. Méndez. In this program, we discuss the importance of healthy eating, adequate consumption of vegetables and fruits in the daily diet, as well as the negative implications of not carrying out such consumption. The purpose of carrying out this educational process in students, in addition to aspiring to change their eating habits, is to make them become educators of their peers, as well as promote their insertion in community spaces. There they can help the families of the communities surrounding the University to understand the importance of adequate consumption of vegetables and fruits in the daily diet as a preventive measure.



48.1% of Puerto Ricans consume one or less portions of fruit a day and 7.3% consume no fruit at all in a day

49.9% of Puerto Ricans consume less than two portions of vegetables a day and 24.2% consume less than one portion a day



Planning

How did we come to this issue? Our student population is classified as 100 percent Hispanic, diverse and underserved. Being students of low economic income presents us with a bigger problem, since they do not have the economic resources to access healthy nutrition. Our students as well as the staff members of the University are exposed to constant offers of lunches and dinners considered economical but not healthy. Our experience working with students and on-campus staff members is that they hardly consider what they eat and the implications it has on their wellbeing and health. That is why we focus on education about healthy plates and how healthy habits impact our health. In Puerto Rico, there is a cultural and social acceptance that food is not something you choose, it is a given. In addition to that; most of them didn't receive constant education about healthy food selection. We are accustomed to buy ready-to-eat food and many students have never cooked a soup from scratch or understand the concept of cooking a wholesome nutritious meal. People in Puerto Rico are used to eating "salads" in social and family activities which are protein and carbohydrate-based lacking vegetables and fruits. Culturally and socially, people aren't educated about what constitutes a healthy plate and its benefits.

Why did we choose this project? We used Popular Education as a frame of reference, through which there is the possibility of building from knowledge and joint action, and provide the tools to build knowledge in their own way. Popular education is considered a political tool, which means that it allows people through reflection processes and sharing of ideas to take control over their lives, and to create the spaces required to transform their realities.

KEY SKILL SETS

We determined that knowledge of the promotion of basic health behaviors was necessary, as well as an understanding of eating as a psychosocial phenomenon, which is determined by socio political structures. Our team was thus composed of faculty from psychology, social work and naturopathic medicine.

The project is administered by the PI, Dr. Úrsula Aragunde Kohl, with the assistance of graduate level students from the UAGM Counseling Psychology (Jessenia Cuadrado, Mónica Velázquez and Zulay Vicente), and Naturopathic Medicine Program (Alexandra Vélez), who are specially trained to implement and facilitate the project under the direct supervision of the PI and Co PIs, Dr. Fernando Janer Sánchez and Lydael M. Vega Otero. This opportunity helps to train a new generation of underrepresented Hispanic graduate students in cultures of health and positive leadership education as a powerful strategy to create sustainable health cultures.

FUNDING

Funding from Clinical Scholars, a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, was used by Universidad Ana G. Méndez in Gurabo to support team members' time and effort to plan and implement multiple activities. We collaborated with resources for the creation and distribution of healthy dishes and gardens materials, and educational resources in the field of nutrition, gardens, psychology and social self-management (popular education).



SENIOR LEADERS

- Úrsula Aragunde Kohl, Project
 Director and Clinical Psychologist
- Fernando Janer Sánchez, Project
 Director and Naturopathic Doctor
- Lydael Vega Otero, Project Director and Social Worker

JUNIOR LEADERS

- Alexandra Velez, Naturopathic Doctor, PharmD / Pharmacist
- Jessenia Cuadrado, Master's Degree Student in Counselling Psychology
- Mónica Velázquez, Master Degree student in Counseling Psychology
- Zulay Vicente, Master Degree in Counseling Psychology

LINKS

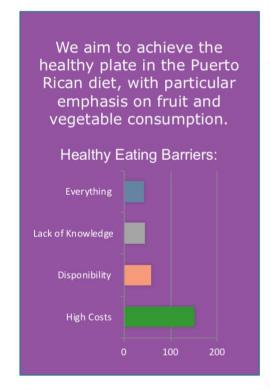
- UT Health Ambassadors YouTube
- UT Health Ambassadors
 Facebook Page
- @proyectoutha Instagram

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

We have amassed a great number of resources including agricultural associations, vendors, and food delivery services. We have also formed alliances with different service institutions such as the Down Syndrome foundation, and Nuestra Escuela, a project for youth deserted by the educational system. Additionally, we obtained enthusiastic patronage by the Chancellor of our college. During our food oasis events we invited participants from the community to sell their goods, plants, food and groceries in our events. Different artisans and agronomists regularly participate. The Association of Down Syndrome of Puerto Rico also came with their team of Placita 21 to sell the different agricultural products created by their participants; teaching our communities that there are no limits. We have offered some educational workshops (live and remote) to different groups in the community; some elderly groups in nearby municipalities, and different associations like "Asociación de Intercambio Cultural Inc."



UTHA'S PROJECT LOGIC MODEL



Inputs

Healthy Plate Education

> Gardening materials

Cooking materials to prepare healthy meal options

Literature revision

Among others

Outputs

Activities: Healthy Foods

Oasis
Workshops
Growing seeds of
health program

Participants:

Ana G. Méndez University

1. Students

2. Employees

Outcomes

Healthy Food Oasis:

Approximately **983** student and staff participants

Popular Education Workshops:

Approximately **180** students

Gardens in Psychology and Health Programs

Two gardens developed on our campus.

Project work

The UT Health Ambassadors stated goal is to increase knowledge and access to healthy eating options and environments at the Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Gurabo campus, in order to promote a culture of health to all involved. For the third year, in bringing the project home and adapting to the current pandemic, we have decided to literally bring the project home through online education and home deliveries of produce and gardening supplies.

- Healthy Food Oasis: This activity has been adapted to follow the model of community-supported agriculture growing in our country. Accordingly, we have contracted local agricultures to provide local produce boxes to students either by pick up at a central spot, or home delivery. The boxes come with a recipe pamphlet for the vegetables and fruit in their box.
- School Gardens: We are undertaking the rehabilitation of the vegetable orchards, which have greatly suffered during on-going institutional lockdown. Significant research has been performed to design spaces for sustainability, ease of maintenance and cultural significance.
- Home Gardens: Given the inaccessibility to the gardens for the foreseeable future, we are stressing the preparation of home gardens in our educational component. We have also prepared and are delivering a garden in a box with the supplies and seeds necessary for participants to eat what they grow. We developed a workplan considering the 35% home garden benchmark identified by the US National Gardening Association.
- Health Ambassador Modules: These modules have been adapted to online to facilitate outreach to the student and staff population. They comprise the areas of nutrition, home gardening, self-care and leadership. Upon completion, participants receive a certificate and a food or gardening box.
- Training to Training Modules: We are developing an online module aimed at student associations and University administrative staff focused on developing leadership skills and motivation for the expansion and continuity of our project.
- Health Promoting Policy for Campus: Complete a policy statement and submit it to the chancellor and high-level administrative staff.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- Phase 1: Integration into Clinical Scholars, recruitment of student facilitators, design of the Culture of Health Interdisciplinary Class, the Health Ambassadors Modules and orchard.
- Phase 2: Planning of educational activities for student associations, integration of the health culture course into the academic curriculum, design and identification of resources for the UT Food Oasis.
- Phase 3: Creation of the university garden, implementation of the educational modules and Food Oasis, offer the health culture course, community impact.
- Phase 4: Evaluation and analysis of the strategies implemented.



"I am extremely grateful for the contents of the food box from local harvests!

I have not found such fresh food for a long time! I have consecutively consumed fresh salad, potato salad, baked sweet potatoes, I have made mojito for the vegetables, green sauce to accompany the food, even for Thanksgiving dinner food was used. My body felt much lighter and healthier!"

- M. Arroyo

Evaluation and dissemination

The proposed evaluation approach and methods have been aligned to the goals, objectives and performance measures set forth in the project. The specific evaluation objectives are the following: 1) assess progress toward objectives completion and provide recommendations; 2) determine the effectiveness of the project; and, 3) determine the impact of the project on our campus.

To be able to gather information on the evaluation objectives, we created some instruments that would allow us to gather data from our participants. The first is a socio-demographic tool administered in the form of a questionnaire (Appendix F.3) and it includes questions that gather education, age, gender, income, government assistance (if it is received), and educational aspects and limitations about healthy eating. With this information, it was possible to have a clear view of the socio-demographic aspects of those we impacted as well as the reality of healthy eating habits and education in our college community. Apart from this, we developed certain questionnaires to determine how much people liked the activities that were offered by our project as well as how useful the information or services provided to them was. All of these evaluation tools (Appendix F) helped to focus our project as well as give us information on the effectiveness of the strategies used.

OUTCOMES

- **Healthy Food Oasis:** We impacted over 200 participants in 8 activities, allowing them the opportunity to consume healthy foods. Just as well, they have received information on the importance of healthy eating, consumption of healthy desserts, the importance of snacks in our daily diet, how food contributes to concentration and memory, among other topics (Appendix C.2).
- Lunch with the Chancellor: Project staff organized an informative lunch with the School Chancellor to provide information and request support for the Health Promoting Policy for the campus. The Chancellor was supportive of the effort, eager to harvest food from our gardens, and incorporate the project into his own courses at the university (Appendix B.1).
- **Student Modules:** We impacted 335 students (241 in person and 94 online) with modules aimed at increasing food and self-care knowledge (Appendix E).
- Junior Leaders: During the summer, all of the students on our project staff received access to the Fast Track leadership modules used by Clinical Scholars. In addition to helping bolster the professional development of our students, this assisted them in the design of the learning modules developed by our project.

The dissemination plan relies greatly on maintaining the gardens within our university alive and offering services through our Train the Trainers program so that we can create Healthy Culture Leaders that may keep our teachings alive. During the preparation of our gardens, sustainability was a big contributing factor into selecting what plants would be included. It is our hope that said plants survive without constant care, making our gardens sustainable. As far as our Train the Trainers program, we are currently working on offering educational modules to students and personnel so that they may carry on with some of the projects eating prospects.





"About the garden kit, it has been a good experience. I was delighted to have received the tools offered. My broccoli has already grown a lot and I am excited to see their progress. Only two of the calendula have germinated, even so it has caused me a lot of happiness to see their progress. I look forward to a few months from now to be able to eat broccoli that I grew myself."

V. De Jesús

Challenges, successes, and lessons learned

Due to COVID, the institution was closed and we needed their permission to work directly with the students. We made several plans that we couldn't carry out. In August 2020, we solved this with permission from one of our Senior Leaders to work outside the institution. We made some educational materials and videos to deliver remotely through our NEOLMS platform, and other apps to do our educational modules sessions and for our social media networks.

In the last few months, during our deliveries most of the students didn't have transportation and it was difficult for some of them to get to the meeting point for delivery. Our solution was to improve our approach with the students, call them directly instead of through email or text message. In that way we got a real commitment from them before we placed the order to our providers. We also got providers to deliver directly to their homes in the last activities instead of to the checkpoint.

Also, the lack of a universal "free hour" for students made it a little bit difficult to get the desired participation in our "Placita" / food oasis events. Our solution was to talk to different professors to integrate our Food oasis activities into their class hour and that way we invited them to be there with us as part of their class.

SUCCESSES

We impacted 125 students and their families with the deliveries of Healthy Food Kits, booklet of recipes, and Garden Kits to start growing their own food at their homes. We helped them in this critical pandemic situation, where some of them and their parents lost their jobs and therefore compromised their access to food. We supported them in some home and familiar activities with the garden kits, improving in that way their mental and nutritional health. We noticed the need to include their complete family, especially their parents. During the deliveries we noticed the family enthusiasm and they were grateful for our efforts and initiatives. Their parents were key to get us to notice the real needs in their homes, as well as the enthusiasm of their family members to participate in activities, especially the garden kits.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Working as a team is crucial
- Initiatives like this from private organizations are important, not dependent on the government; guarantees better execution and follow up
- Direct contact with participants makes a difference in participation
- Always listen: Practicing active listening is crucial when trying to achieve the
 established goals and greater success can be achieved if we modify according to
 the needs and realities of the participants and the work team
- Be flexible: When we allow ourselves to be flexible, we are more creative, empathetic and we enjoy the processes
- Embrace differences: You will have a greater chance of success if you accept differences and face difficult conversations with openness and respect



"The activity was excellent; the resources were very creative. I am very excited because my tomato plants are growing and so are my lettuces. Thank you for inviting me to be part of this informative activity and I hope you continue to do so since I consider it an excellent alternative to empower people about the importance of food and the benefits of a home garden."

Y. Montanez

Recommendations

Much of the work when the project started focused on educating ourselves on the issue at hand to be able to develop appropriate techniques to deal with the problem. As an advice to anyone else trying to deal with a wicked issue such as this, the recommendation would be to research on the information that is already out there and what has proved to be effective and what not.

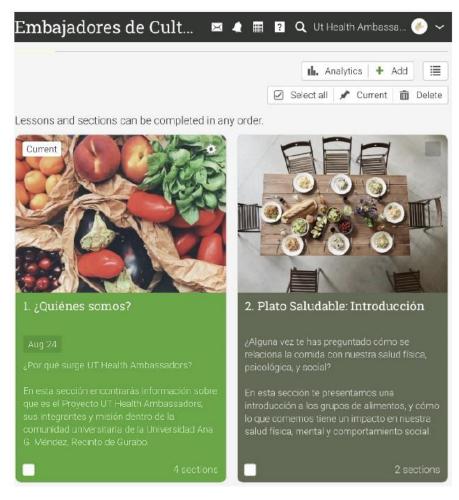
BEST PRACTICES

- Importance of involving family members in events as parents had the final decision of what to eat at home in most cases.
- It is necessary to monitor your own expectations given that sometimes the goals are not met in the way that you expected. Flexibility will help you in adapting to the different situations that may arise.
- Show openness and do not assume: promoting the practice of healthy cultures is not only nutrition, it must address social, cultural and psychological aspects.
- Make the approach and involve every group or organization, and use all the available resources that have an impact

on the population you are working with. For example, if it is with the university community, take the message to the administration, use resources such as radio, student organizations, among others.

ADVICE

- Direct contact promotes more participation therefore more people impacted
- Meet deadlines
- Have structure and clear instructions
- Get feedback on time and clarify doubts
- Carry out self-assessment and personal analysis
- Relate effort and goals to actual plans
- Focus on ability to find solutions
- Difficult conversations are important



"I found it very informative and the video very necessary, because many times we think that having a balanced diet is not possible, but if we inform ourselves in the correct way, we can see that it is."

- N. Castellano

Appendix

APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF PROMOTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS









APPENDIX B: ALLIANCES AT THE UNIVERSITY

B.1 Lunch with the chancellor: We offered a plant-based alternative with the collaboration of the restaurant "El Grifo."











B.2 Radio activities: We collaborated with "Radio Taíno", the radio station of Universidad Ana G. Mendez in Gurabo, where we had the opportunity to talk about healthy cultures, barriers and limitations in the university community.





APPENDIX C: EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY FOOD OASIS ACTIVITIES

FEB 2021

SEMILLAS & SEMILLEROS

PROYECTO UT HEALTH AMBASSADORS & EDGARDO DE LA TORRE- AGRÓNOMO

¡Taller virtual GRATIS!







Inscríbete y participa!

INSTRUCCIONES:

Paso 1: Darle like a nuestra página de facebook en o antes de marzo 6, 2021.

https://www.facebook.com/proyectoutha.

Paso 2: Completar el registro en o antes de marzo 6, 2021.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpOLSfmiNbM1L1a8ivn ZAYVSii3pUA3dBSN4_2rku61WvO9gul2fw/viewform? usp=sf link

Paso 3: Acceder al grupo privado en o antes de marzo 6, 2021.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/124183686271494/about

Paso 4: Ver el video localizado en el grupo privado luego de ser aceptado en o antes de Marzo 6, 2021.

Paso 5: Realizar evaluación de actividad luego de ver el video. https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpOLSf5DPRr85PyZGo5

KoGSbeGlXzp7_CDM-PwXrMSZleZvlt-6ag/viewform?usp=sf_link

Paso 6: Accede a este enlace para un regalo, luego de hacer los pasos 1 al 5

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpOLSczWzF3z00ZSOpX 16gcwlaszskXLiD_zKODne4qVo8NSAYy9w\viewform? usp-sf link









APPENDIX D: GARDENS

D.1 UAGM gardens









D.2 Home gardens





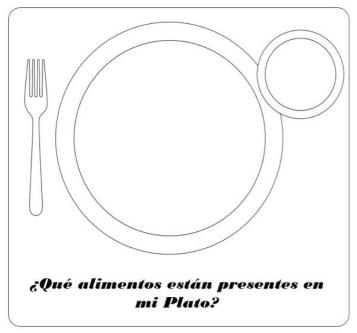


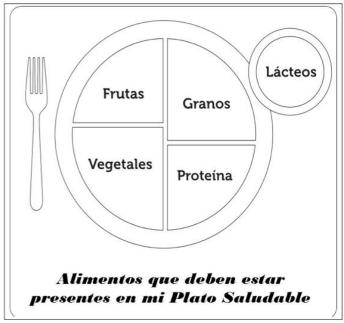




APPENDIX E: LEARNING MODULES

E.1 "Plato Saludable" module activities for students













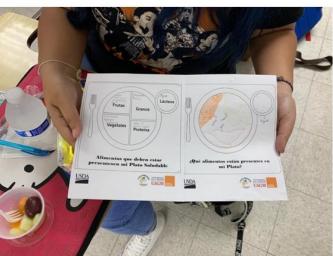










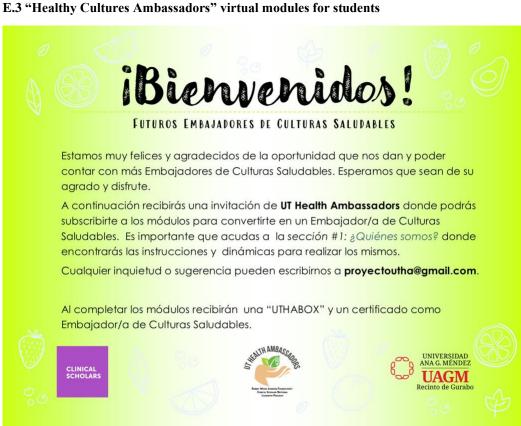


E.2 Healthy plant-based recipe module activities for administrative staff









E.4 "Healthy Culture Leaders" virtual modules for leaders



APPENDIX F: FORMS AND METHODS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION

F.1 Healthy Food Oasis registration and input forms

- https://form.jotform.com/202954127400851
- https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd-KqNken4lj7A1CaTKDXvtmN7hFWUmLq27ZLmTOB6gc 4MUQ/
- https://form.jotform.com/203206188172047
- https://form.jotform.com/210774310803851

F.2 Evaluation Tools for our activities

https://form.jotform.com/210803764829865

F.3 Socio-demographic evaluation tool

INFORMACIÓN SOCIODEMOGRÁFICA

Actividad: Fech		cha:	Lug	gar:		
	Sexo:					
	Pueblo en que vive:					
3.	3. ¿Cuál es el estado civil que mejor lo define actualmente? ☐ Soltero/a ☐ Convivo / Pareja no casada					
	□ Solicio/a	□ Convivo	i areja no casad	ia.		
	☐ Casado/a	☐ Divorciad	lo/a o separado/a	1		
	□ Viudo/a	☐ Otro:				
4.	¿Dónde nació? — Puerto Rico	☐ Fuera	a de Puerto Rico			
5. Indique a qué grupo de edad pertenece (años):						
	\square 17 o menor \square 18-20	□ 21-25	□ 26-30	□ 31-35		
	□ 36-40 □ 41-45	□ 46-50	□ 51-55	□ 56-65		
	☐ 66 o mayor					
6.	Grado académico más alto completa ☐ 1-6 grado ☐ 7-	•				
	•					
	\square 10-11 grado \square 4	to año de Escue	ela Superior			
	☐ Grado Asociado ☐ E	Bachillerato				
	☐ Maestría ☐ ☐	Ooctorado	□Otro:			
	8. ¿Tiene hijos/as?	cuántos?	□ No			
9. Marque cuál de las siguientes categorías le describe mejor:						
	☐ Estudiante		☐ Desemplea	do/a		
	☐ Desempleado/a con asiste	encia social	□Ama/o d	e casa		
	☐ Empleado/a a tiempo paro	cial	☐ Emplead	lo/a a tiempo completo		
	☐ Retirado/a con pensión		☐ Incapacita	ado/a		

	□ Otro	<u> </u>				
□ M€	10. ¿Cuál es su i enos de \$10,000	ingreso anual? □\$10,000 a \$14,999	9 □\$15,000 a \$24,99	9 □\$25,000 a \$34,999		
□ \$3:	5,000 a \$49,999	□ \$50,000 a \$74,999	9 □\$75,000 a \$99,999	9 □\$100,000 a \$149,999		
□ \$1:	50,000 a \$199,999	D \$200,000 ó más	□ Ninguno			
	11. ¿Recibes ayu □ Sí □No	ıda del Programa de	Asistencia Nutricional	del Gobierno?		
□ Sí	_	¿alguna vez hablaro	on de una alimentación s	saludable (plato saludable)?		
□ Sí		has recibido clases o	talleres sobre alimenta	ción saludable?		
□ Sí	• 0	z has recibido educac	ción del impacto de la al	imentación en nuestra salud?		
□ Sí	15. ¿Alguna vez □No	ha recibido educació	ón de cómo llevar a cabo	o una alimentación saludable?		
□ Sí		ha recibido educació	ón de cómo cultivar tus	alimentos?		
	17. ¿Alguna vez ha recibido educación de cómo elaborar tus alimentos de forma saludable? □ Sí □No					
	18. ¿Cuáles son los pricipales obstáculos que encuentras para añadir comida saludable a tu dieta?					
	☐ Altos Costos	□ Disponibilidad	☐ Falta de conocimiento	Dónde los consigo?		

F.4 IRB support documents



787-751-0178 exts 7195-7284

Vicepresidencia de Planificación y Asuntos Académicos Vicepresidencia Asociada Recursos Externos y Cumplimiento Oficina de Cumplimiento

Junta para la Protección de Seres Humanos en la Investigación (IRB)

Fecha: 30 de agosto de 2019

Investigadora ; Dra. Úrsula Aragunde Kohl

Titulo del protocolo : "UT Health Ambassadors"

Número de protocolo: 03-045-19

Tipo de solicitud : Protocolo inicial

Recinto, Escuela : Gurabo, Ciencias Sociales y Humanas

Tipo de revisión : Exenta

Acción tomada : Aprobada

Fecha de revisión : 30 de agosto de 2019

Certificamos que el estudio/investigación de referencia fue recibido, revisado y aprobado en la Oficina de Cumplimiento por la *Junta para la Protección de Seres Humanos en la Investigación* (IRB). El mismo fue evaluado y cumple con los criterios establecidos bajo 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1-6) para ser clasificado como **Exento** con un periodo de vigencia del 30 de agosto de 2019 al 29 de agosto de 2020.

Favor de tener presente lo siguiente:

- La hoja informativa es un documento que asegura que los sujetos o participantes entienden su participación en el estudio, además de ser un seguro de protección para los mismos. De acuerdo con las Regulaciones Federales se requiere que los participantes reciban copia de la hoja informativa antes de contestar el cuestionario.
- De realizarse aigún cambio en los documentos anejados con este estudio deben ser sometidos nuevamente al IRB para su debida revisión y aprobación, utilizando la forma de IRB "Solicitud para Cambios/ Enmiendas".
- Todo evento adverso o no esperado debe ser informado al IRB utilizando la forma de IRB de Solicitud de Eventos Adversos y Problemas Inesperados.
- Todos los documentos relacionados con la investigación deben ser guardados hasta un término de cinco (5) años. Pasado este término los mismos deben ser eliminados/ triturados, no quemados.

LIA/SM_IRB_SoliEsp Rev.2019 Págine 1 de 2



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- De realizarse aigün cambio en los documentos anejados con este estudio deben ser sometidos nuevamente al IRB para su debida revisión y aprobación, utilizando la forma de IRB "Solicitud para Cambios/ Enmiendas".
- Todo evento adverso o no esperado debe ser informado al IRB utilizando la forma de IRB de Solicitud de Eventos Adversos y Problemas Inesperados.
- Todos los documentos relacionados con la investigación deben ser guardados hasta un término de cinco (5) años. Pasado este término los mismos deben ser eliminados/ triturados, no quemados.

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