Conferences on Aging and Health

The Situation:
As our society ages there is an increased demand for supporting services for the elderly. These services can range from a meal at the Senior Center to intensive care in a long term care facility. Health professionals, social workers, agency personnel, volunteers and family members provide these services. Training is needed, relative to aging and health, for care providers of the elderly. This training will increase their ability to improve the quality of life for older members of our society. Training resources are more effectively used by joining efforts with other universities in conducting community education. This also provides an opportunity for personnel to receive continuing education credits for their state certification.

Our Response:
Contacts were established with the Continuing Education Department at Idaho State University. Our objective was to plan and conduct an educational conference on the topic of aging and health. We were invited to cosponsor the 9th Annual Conference on Health Care at ISU. Extension faculty were asked to develop and teach the workshops needed for the Elderly and Aging tract.

Achievements:
Extension faculty taught seven different workshops to 309 participants. In the exhibit area complete nutritional assessments were run for 50 additional clientele. One hundred and forty evaluations were returned. They indicated that:
98% would set new goals by using at least one idea from the workshop
77% listed a behavior they planned to change as a result of the workshop
95% said they learned quite a bit about this topic
86% rated the workshop as very valuable to them and that it met their expectations

Comments from the different classes included the following:
Medicaid Fraud - “Make sure I bill correctly and for the exact services I give.” (doctor)
Nursing Home Decision - “I will check around and involve the older person, also make a list of needs for both the family members and the client.” (care center administrator)
Who Gets Grandma’s Yellow Pie Plate - “Talk to my brother to be sure he’s aware of decisions my parents have made.” (health care professional)
Letter of Last Instructions - “Do our letter and give one to my parents and adult children to fill out.” (health care professional)
Safe Food Handling for Seniors - "I will let seniors receiving meals on wheels know of these dangers." (senior center meal supervisor)
Antioxidants and the Aging Process - "I will look closely at the diets of my clients." (dietitian)
Take a Dose of Humor ".....smile and not take life so seriously." (student)

**Cooperators and Co-Sponsors:**
Gayle Furness, Department of Continuing Education and Conferences, Idaho State University
Doris K. Williams, Ph.D., Extension Specialist, University of Idaho
Mary Lee Wolf, U of I Extension Educator, Madison County
Janice Stimpson, U of I, Extension Educator, Fremont County
Mary Ann Lawroski, U of I Extension Educator, Bonneville County
Mary Lou Ruby, U of I Extension Educator, Bingham County
Becky Dahl, U of I Extension Educator, Bannock County
Joan Parr, U of I Extension Educator, Cassia County

Diane Schmerbauch, U of I Extension Educator, Minidoka County
Arlene Davidson, Director, Idaho Commission on Aging

**The Future:**
We have been invited to develop a tract for the 1998 Idaho Conference on Health Care. We are in the process of formulating plans for this conference. It is scheduled to be held October 28-30, 1998.

**For More Information:**
Mary Lee Wolf, CFCS, Extension Educator
Family and Consumer Science
University of Idaho
Madison County Administration Building
P. O. Box 580
Rexburg, ID 83440
Phone: (208) 356-3191
Fax: (208) 356-8396
E-mail: madison@uidaho.edu
dh98ms01aging&health 2/98