

**CAN FAMILY DOCTORS INCREASE THE WILLINGNESS OF MEN TO PARTICIPATE IN HEALTH COURSES WITHIN COMMUNITY-MEDICINE?**

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**BACKGROUND:** In Oestringen, a German town of 13.400 inhabitants, family practice-based surveys enable the assessment of cardiovascular risk factors after intervention. Over time, the experience was confirmed that men between the ages of 30 and 60 are rarely ready to participate in health courses. Our aim was to increase their willingness to participate.

**METHODS:** In some German towns, primary care physicians cooperate with each other and with schools, coaches of sports clubs as well as local businesses, by applying a three level strategy: the individual consultation at the doctor's office (1st level) is expanded to include educational patient groups in the doctor's office (2nd level) and within the community (3rd level). In 2005, we carried out the last of seven cross sectional surveys, each survey including approx. 1.000 persons, using a special questionnaire with a concrete offer to increase the willingness of men with risk factors to take part in special health courses with a walking group for men only.

**RESULTS:** During the last 15 years, the two risk factors smoking and hypertension could be reduced by 13 or 40%, respectively. As a consequence of the last survey with its special offer, 86 out of 197 men were interested in the health course, 30 had at least two risk factors; finally, 23 succeeded in participating for more than 6 months up to now.

**CONCLUSION:** Within community medicine, special offers of primary care physicians can motivate more men to participate in health courses for reducing CVD-risk factors.