ENHANCEMENT OF THE HEALTHY EATING AND LIFESTYLE PROGRAM (HELP) ONLINE

Edward Vincent J. Magtibay, Noelle Lyn C. Santos, Robby Carlo A. Tan, Marilou L. Madrid, Consuelo L. Orense, and Lew Jason Nuyda

BACKGROUND

Preventive measures to reduce non-communicable diseases are continuously undertaken. However, this requires improvement in the health delivery system and health promotion schemes for all age groups. In 2016, the Food and Nutrition Research Institute introduced to the public and information communication technology (ICT) –based umbrella program called iFNRI. Part of this program is the Healthy Eating and Lifestyle Program (HELP) Online, a nutrition website specifically created to provide nutrition counseling services and evidence-based information on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) to Filipinos.

OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to develop additional enhancement features on selected modules of the HELP Online website to cater to more age groups.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

An iterative process was followed in all stages of development of the additional enhancement features on the Fast Assessment and Screening Tools (FAST) and HELP Tracker. Nutrition experts together with the research team developed, reviewed and edited all technical and creative contents for validity and appropriateness in communicating information not only with adult population but also with children, adolescents and pregnant women. All prototypes also underwent multiple testing and revisions.

RESULTS

The enhanced FAST, a collection of interactive nutrition calculators, can fasttrack the assessment of nutritional status and the risk for NCDs of pregnant women, children and adolescents. The enhanced HELP Tracker features an updated Food Tracker capable of evaluating the users’ food intake using the Philippine Food Composition Tables database. In addition, it can also combine the outputs of the Food Tracker and the Physical Activity Tracker as well as monitoring of calorie intake and energy expenditure. Other updates in the website also focused on tightening security measures and validity of accounts to further protect the confidentiality of the users’ database.

CONCLUSION

Enhancements on the website were developed to address the age-group limitation of the existing website. The HELP website supports modernized delivery of health and nutrition assessment and counseling for Filipinos.