

INSTITUTE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE & ADVOCACY



Kathey Avery, RN, BSN

Avery Health - Education and Consulting brings extensive experience and knowledge to help individuals and groups achieve positive health outcomes and implement equity.

Kathey Avery, founder and owner of Avery Health - Education and Consulting, has more than 35 years of experience in healthcare and community activism. She is dedicated to raising awareness about, and helping in the prevention of, chronic diseases and preventable cancers through patient and public education and personal accountability.

Contact Kathey Avery today at 828-768-2369 to schedule a talk or workshop. For more details, please visit www.AveryHEC.com



The mission of the **Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy** is to promote optimum health for all residents of Buncombe County and surrounding areas by addressing the social determinants of health and the inequities in access to affordable and preventive healthcare.

www.ifpha.org

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Improving Health in Our Community

BY KATHEY AVERY RN, BSN, CN

The Institute for Preventive Healthcare & Advocacy (IFPHA) works in the community to improve health.

IFPHA is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote optimum health for all residents of Buncombe County and surrounding areas by addressing the social determinants (drivers) of health and the inequities in access to affordable preventive healthcare. We envision a Buncombe County with increased access to affordable and equitable preventive healthcare that addresses the social determinants of health.

As a nonprofit, we are constantly working to obtain grants to sustain our organization and our mission to serve our most underserved communities. Why? As a Community Nurse I know that there are too many people, especially in our BIPOC communities, “falling through the cracks” of our broken healthcare systems.

Our goal at IFPHA is to provide community services at no charge to you. But these services cost us both time and money, which is why we work tirelessly seeking funding and hosting fundraisers. Helping clients apply for Medicare, Medicaid, or other insurance means our team will be pulled into the timeline of these insurance companies, and the client's needs may not be fully met, especially if they are complex, as many are.

Who is on our team?

Our team consists of Angelique Scott, our Community Health Worker Supervisor and LPN. I serve as the Community Health Nurse. We encourage people in local communities to become Community Health Workers (CHW), train them through our four hour training session, and offer them subcontracted community health work as trainees. If they show interest, IFPHA will pay for them to go to one of the community colleges that offer CHW classes to obtain their certification. This is IFPHA's economic commitment to providing a real living wage. We value their lived experience, and if they are interested in CHW, IFPHA will continue supporting them in leadership roles to further their journey toward better economic wealth.

Prevention of illnesses is IFPHA's main goal, which means that as a Community Nurse I tailor health education to promote healthy lifestyles. My main focus is to change the health habits of our next generations, and support lifestyle changes in our adult population before a preventable illness becomes chronic.

Leo Babauta, founder of Zen Habits,

stated that changing habits is one of the most fundamental skills we learn, because it allows us to reshape our life. It can be transformational. As a community nurse for IFPHA, I also know once a habit is learned it is difficult to unlearn. For example, having that cigarette after you eat or whenever you feel anxious, or learning poor eating habits when you are young, can be difficult habits to break.

How long does it take to unlearn a bad habit?

Since the brain doesn't distinguish between good and bad habits, and it is difficult for the brain to unlearn them, it can take an average of 30 to 60 days to actually break a habit, according to Kiana Shelton, LCSW from Mindpath Health. That's why consistency is key when trying to reach a desired goal.

Our team works with individuals and groups for the long haul, building trust, helping them make small changes after providing them with health education and effective ways to change their lifestyles to improve their health. We understand from our own health journeys how important healthy habits are when working to change our lifestyles.

Chronic Illness Management

IFPHA's team knows that chronic illnesses start early and stay with a person throughout their lifespan. The leading causes of death and disability in the US, according to the Joe and Emily Lui Foundation, are heart disease, cancer, stroke, Type II diabetes, and kidney disease. As a Community Nurse, I am passionate about education as a way to help manage these chronic illnesses so individuals can live their best life.

How does our team do this work?

IFPHA hosts health education classes in churches, public housing, affordable housing, community centers—even going door to door to work with individuals directly. We provide our own resources, and we collaborate and partner with other organizations for organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and for a greater impact. It is important to make sure healthcare organizations don't work in isolation and are equitable and inclusive when providing care.

Our team takes the time to listen and address the needs of individuals in order to provide much more effective care. For example, after giving healthy education classes we know the price of fresh fruits and vegetables can be a barrier. With funding, we can provide some of those healthy food



Angelique Scott made sure that John Fiveash, one of our NC CARE referrals, got the car seat he needed for a baby.



Angelique Scott (left) and Sona pharmacist Catherine visit a home in Hendersonville to give a Covid vaccination.



Angelique (left) and new CHW trainee Anika Ervin at an IFPHA outreach event in Asheville.



Telle King and Kathey giving a dementia awareness class to UNETE, a Latino non-profit organization.

items. Our team works in many low-wealth communities. We know that our seniors are on fixed incomes, or may not yet be ready or able to buy healthy food. We also make sure individuals are able to get to the doctor, grocery store, and if needed, we help them find a doctor.

I hope this begins to address what IFPHA's team does to help create a healthy, happy, and productive community. To learn more, go to our website, www.ifpha.org.