

## **Advocacy Plan:**

One of the main issues to be advocated for through this program is the need for a comprehensive and collaborative stress management program in cardiac rehabilitation through a process and policy change at the national level. The first is to start small with the hospital where the pilot program is being launched. Having stakeholders who believe in the mission and message of the program and who have credibility in the medical field is important. Through them we can create a debate about the importance of stress management in cardiac health. Once the program has ended, we can use the data and outcomes to present to that hospital the reasons for a stress management program within their cardiac rehab program, while also providing evidence of the success of using CAM interventions for this stress management. Then, the advocacy can expand to that hospital system, the state, regionally, and then nationally.

Our opposition will include some cardiologists, hospital leadership, local and state medical associations, regional and national medical associations as they may not see the issue as important as exercise and diet for example. They also may not find the CAM interventions are the best modalities for stress management in cardiac care. The main people being influenced by advocating for this process change in cardiac rehab programs would be mainly cardiologists and hospital leadership. Those are the groups that will either find our program and initiative important and worth the funding and process change or not.

We will work with cardiac rehab patients who found benefit from the program, as well as allies from the cardiology department at the hospital, and our integrative health department within the hospital system. We can present locally at organizations whose members may benefit from our message as well as presenting peer reviewed articles and data to the cardiologists and

hospital leadership. Once we achieve local process change at our hospital system wide, we could move to other hospital systems in the county and state. Creating a coalition of advocates from hospital systems across the state of Ohio would help with an overall process change in other states and nationally.

Our key messages will be consistent, concise, and compelling across our campaign. Stress exacerbates cardiac events and can slow recovery from a cardiac episode, therefore, the need for a stress management program using CAM interventions should be including in all cardiac rehabilitation programming. To convey this message, we will use letter writing, presentations, media including social media using branded campaign materials, consensus issue papers, and community champions. Our outcomes will be measured first by the integration of our program into different hospitals in Northeast Ohio. If we can obtain a process change at one hospital, that will also be evidence of a successful local advocacy program that we can expand for a continued furthering reach.