

**A Health-Maintenance Promotion Program
among Independent Elderly
in the Community: An Evaluation Study**

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Maccabi Healthcare Services and ESHEL initiated an experimental program to enhance the proactive involvement of community-dwelling elders and of their GPs in maintaining their health and increasing awareness of the subject. The program was unique in that it comprised two separate components: exposing the elders to health-promoting behaviors and exposing their GPs to same, in two separate interventions that included lectures, small discussion groups and written materials. The program was monitored by a prospective study that examined its implementation and contribution using a quasi-experimental design, with an experimental group that included elders and GPs who had participated in the program and two control groups – one where only the GPs participated and the other where no one had participated in the program.

Within two years, the percentage of elders who had their vision and hearing tested increased in the experimental group, while the percentage of those who thought that the responsibility for their health lies solely with their GP decreased. Among the GPs, the percentage of those who referred their patients to screening tests increased, not only for patients in the program, but also for their other elderly patients.

The study indicates that the program contributed to improving screening tests and health maintenance activities. Thus, it is important to consider adopting and implementing major components of the program.

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