TARGET AUDIENCE
This program is for older adults who have minor depression or persistent depressive disorder (i.e., dysthymia) and individuals with epilepsy.

SUMMARY
Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS), a community-based program, is designed to improve participants' quality of life by striving to help these individuals reduce depressive symptoms and possible suicidal tendencies.

EVIDENCE
Two randomized controlled trials (RCTs) were conducted with adults who demonstrated behaviors consistent with minor depression or dysthymia. In both studies, at a 12-month follow-up, individuals who had participated in PEARLS rated themselves significantly lower on a measure of depressive symptoms than those in the control group. In addition, in one study, one third of the intervention group demonstrated complete remission of depressive symptoms at the 12-month follow-up. In the second study, at the 12-month follow-up, suicidal ideations decreased by 24% in the intervention group, while they decreased by 12% in the control group. An additional study, conducted in individuals with epilepsy, demonstrated lower scores of depression severity, less suicidal ideation, and better emotional well-being 18 months after baseline compared to participants in usual care.

COMPONENTS
Initially, the PEARLS program begins by screening participants for depressive disorders. Following the assessment, three main components are implemented:

- Problem-Solving Treatment (PST): Teach skills to help participants solve daily life problems, set goals, and evaluate progress toward meeting goals;
- Social and Physical Activation: Establish healthy routines, increase positive experiences, overcome avoidance issues, and develop better daily functioning; and
- Pleasant Activities Scheduling: Counter depressive feelings by engaging in enjoyable activities selected by the individual.

Sessions are delivered by a trained health or social service professional (e.g., social worker, nurse, case manager) and occur in clients' homes or a community-based setting. Additional activities may be given as homework.

PREVIOUS USE
Since this program's initial implementation in 2006, the PEARLS program has been used widely across the United States. The program has also been implemented with adults who have chronic conditions and with Veterans and spouses of Veterans.
# Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS)

**TRAINING**

A 2-day, on-site or off-site training is available for professionals, counselors, social workers, and nurses with master's degrees and costs $445 per person.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Considerations for implementing this program include recruiting staff, including a manager, clinical supervisor, data coordinator, and counselors; ensuring that counselors obtain training; acquiring participant buy-in; creating a data management system to gather and store acquired information; understanding funding to support program costs will need to be obtained; and making time to hold program sessions.

The Clearinghouse can help address these considerations. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**IMPLEMENTATION**

If you are interested in implementing the PEARLS program, the Clearinghouse is interested in helping you! Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**TIME**

The PEARLS program is implemented in six to eight 45- to 60-minute sessions over 4 to 5 months. Sessions are initially held weekly and occur less frequently over time.

**COST**

Program implementation costs are approximately $630 per client. An electronic toolkit is offered for free online at www.pearlsprogram.org/Training/PEARLS-Toolkit.aspx

**EVALUATION PLAN**

To move the PEARLS program to the Effective category on the Clearinghouse Continuum of Evidence at least one external evaluation must be conducted that demonstrates sustained, positive outcomes. This study must be conducted independently of the program developer.

The Clearinghouse can help you develop an evaluation plan to ensure the program components are meeting your goals. Please call 1-877-382-9185 or email Clearinghouse@psu.edu

**CONTACT**

Contact the Clearinghouse with any questions regarding this program.
Phone: 1-877-382-9185 Email: Clearinghouse@psu.edu

You may also contact the PEARLS Program by mail: Innovation Learning, CoMotion, University of Washington, Box 354950, 4545 Roosevelt Way NE, Suite 400, Seattle, WA 98105, email uwpearls@u.washington.edu, or visit www.pearlsprogram.org/Contact-Us.aspx

**SOURCE**

www.pearlsprogram.org/ and http://legacy.nreppadmin.net/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=368