

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Evaluation of the TAKE CHARGE® Program



December 2017

A PERSONAL APPROACH

The TAKE CHARGE Program is a two-day wellness weekend that provides people living with MS and their support partners with an interactive and multi-disciplinary approach to MS care management.

This hands on weekend incorporates MS education, experiential activities, and interaction with MS experts, participants, and their support partners in a small group setting. By providing a variety of educational topics and engaging the whole person through experiential and group activities Can Do MS and the TAKE CHARGE program are helping families with MS to thrive.



“The most useful information I gained was shared by other participants and all of the information about proper ways to communicate and resilience with MS.”

- TAKE CHARGE Program Participant

“I have gained empowerment. I thought I knew how to encourage myself before Take Charge, but I have the tools for encouragement and empowerment.”

- TAKE CHARGE Program Participant

“I gained good info on how to communicate better, more knowledge and recognition of my partner’s cognitive challenges.”

- TAKE CHARGE Program Participant

CURRENT SURVEY

- One TAKE CHARGE program in Atlanta with 65 people served.
- Participants were asked to reflect upon their program experience and feelings before and after TAKE CHARGE at post (32 PwMS & 25 SPs).
- Average age: PwMS 53 years, SP 55 years; Gender: PwMS 78% Women; SP 40% Women;
- 13 hours of group workshops, seminars, and panel discussions; served by 6 renowned MS Specialists.

OBJECTIVES

- Participate in interactive lectures and workshops, support sessions, shared meal times, and informal social time.
- Experience various learning approaches highlighting each component of wellness.
- Participate in experiential activities (dancing, exercise, adaptive tools/gadgets, and nutrition) and engage in share problem solving for optimal wellness.
- Learn effective communication and problem solving strategies to enhance teamwork and manage challenge of MS.
- Participate in “why are you here” session, support partner group sessions, interactive workshop

FINDINGS SUMMARY

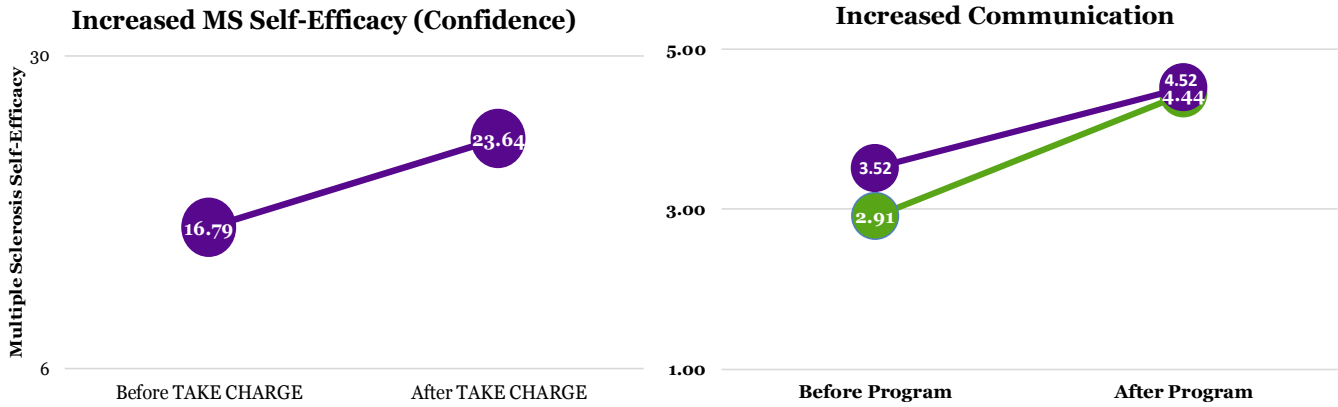
- 96% of PwMS reported improved confidence to better manage MS symptoms*.
- 100% of PwMS and 96% of SPs reported intention to make positive lifestyle behavior changes after TAKE CHARGE*
- PwMS & SPs reported increased feelings of empowerment, MS specific communication, social support and knowledge*.
- PwMS & SPs reported overwhelmingly high levels of program satisfaction and gaining of knowledge, skills and resources.

*statistical analyses run, significant improvement was found ($p < .05$).

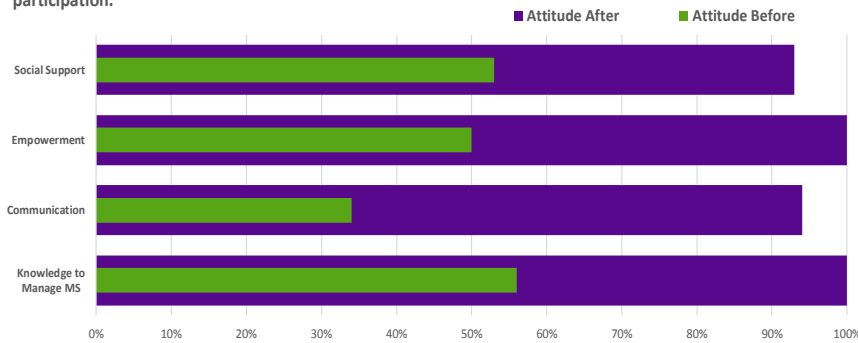
IMMEDIATE IMPACT

- **Increased confidence in living with MS*** (better confidence living with MS, higher scores are associated with better mental and physical health, less stress, less pain, fewer sleep problems, and lower depressive symptoms; *Amtmann et al., 2012*).
- **Increased knowledge, communication and empowerment to better live with MS***
- **Overwhelming program satisfaction and positive behavior change intentions**

*statistical analyses run, significant improvement was found ($p < .05$)



TAKE CHARGE Participants are reporting positive changes in attitudes due to program participation.



“The Can Do staff made the Take Charge program and weekend an AWESOME experience for me and my husband. I didn’t know what to expect, but everything turned out great. Thank you so much Can Do MS.”

- TAKE CHARGE Program Participant

CONCLUSIONS

The TAKE CHARGE Program is an effective model promoting education and positive experiences to increase confidence to transform challenges into possibilities. TAKE CHARGE resulted in immediate outcomes of increased confidence in the management of MS symptoms, knowledge, communication, social support and empowerment. Confidence in MS is linked to quality of life and fewer depressive symptoms (*Amtmann et al., 2012*) and may translate to improved management of MS. Participants reported positive lifestyle change intentions such as increased exercise, better nutrition, and better medication adherence. Implications of making these physical and psychological life changes may lead to improved quality of life and longevity for both the Person with MS and Support Partners (e.g., *Cuffee et al., 2012*; *Moskowitz et al., 2008*; *Motl & McAuley, 2014*).

Can Do MS takes a whole person, whole health, whole community approach to MS by providing people with MS and their support partners with lifestyle empowerment programs. The TAKE CHARGE Program effectively teaches individualized skills and facilitates the mindset to take charge of one’s whole health to live more fully with MS.



“I loved it and I have learned a lot about diet and to just be there for my loved one.”

- TAKE CHARGE Program Participant

*Prepared by Sara Anne Tompkins, PhD; Madipen, LLC

www.mscando.org | info@mscando.org | 800.367.3101 | PO Box 5860, Avon, CO 81620