**INTRODUCTION**

Obesity is a major national public health concern and is strongly associated with increased morbidity and mortality. Specifically, obesity is correlated with increased frequency in coronary artery disease², type two diabetes³, some cancers⁴, and other serious health conditions⁵. An epidemiological study of 21 developed countries found that increased waist size, weight, and BMI are all associated with low income.⁶ Importantly, obesity has a high prevalence among the homeless population, one study finding 42.8% of homeless women obese.⁷ It has been reported that 39% of sheltered homeless Americans are obese and 82% had high cholesterol.⁸ A cross-sectional study looking specifically at a women and children’s shelter found that residents were consuming well below the recommended guidelines for nutrients like calcium and much greater than recommended quantities of unhealthy fats.⁹

JeffHOPE is a student-run clinic of Jefferson Medical College, and the largest student-run health clinic in the country. JeffHOPE provides medical and ancillary care to underserved populations in Philadelphia at six different locations. Education Committee members meet with patients for health counseling in various topics. The following is a nutritional counseling plan specifically designed to address the needs of those living in a shelter setting. It is written with the intention that future education committee members might use and improve upon it.

**METHODS**

Each week, I meet with women one-on-one to do the following:

1. Record the patient’s weight.
2. Review the patient’s food journal—a provided seven day food diary sheet.
3. Review with the patient’s weekly goals as marked on the provided weekly goals sheet. Note which goals were met, and discuss the barriers that led to the unmet goals.
4. Complete a nutrition lesson plan, and then, using motivational interviewing skills, develop new goals for the upcoming week.

**REFERENCES**