

# How Pairing Heat Kits with Safety Education Reduced Heat-Related Risk

**Theme:** Communication, Workflow Integration and Equity, Supply Procurement and Distribution

**Key Tools:** Heat-Health Action Plan (HHAP), Education Materials, Heat Kits

**Related HHAP Interventions:** 1.6



## At a Glance

Extreme heat increases patient anxiety and heightens the risk of heat-related illness, especially for people with limited access to cooling resources. This case study shows how one health center paired heat education with tangible heat kits to improve patient understanding, trust and preparedness, turning simple outreach into an effective, low-cost resilience strategy.

The health center's approach included:

- Lobby-based heat education
- Multilingual pamphlets
- Heat kits (hydration mix, water bottles, misters, etc.)
- Integration with the Heat-Health Action Plan (HHAP)
- Participation at community events for wider reach

## The Problem

In the Southwest United States, a Health Center Coordinator regularly staffed a table in the enclosed lobby. Over time, the Coordinator noticed a pattern: patients stopped by, and when the coordinator brought up heat-health, the conversations often left patients worried rather than reassured. They were especially concerned about outdoor activities and exercise during times of extreme heat.

To bridge the gap between education and practice, the Coordinator prioritized the distribution of practical cooling tools to augment traditional health promotion. The center then implemented a scalable resource program designed to facilitate behavior change and mitigate patient anxiety. This shift ensured that patients were equipped—not just informed—to handle extreme heat.

## The Solution

When the health center adopted a HHAP, the Coordinator used it as a starting point to integrate education and supplies into each patient interaction. Instead of relying solely on verbal warnings or pamphlets, the health center began distributing heat kits that included low-cost items such as electrolyte solution, water bottles and misters that patients could use immediately to stay safe. After this change, when people approached the table, she noticed that they would stay a bit longer if they knew they were going to receive a packet.

This shift strengthened patient trust, empower patients to feel that they can stay safe and transformed routine tabling into an effective, hands-on heat preparedness intervention.

## Key Lessons Learned

- ✓ Supplies increase engagement.
- ✓ Education is more effective when paired with tangible resources.
- ✓ Low-cost interventions can scale quickly.
- ✓ The HHAP made adoption simple.



### How the Work Was Done

Once leadership approved supply distribution, the Coordinator led a rapid, all-staff effort to assemble heat kits. Supplies came from health-focused humanitarian aid organization donations, partner contributions and purchased items.

#### Heat Kit Contents:

- Electrolyte solution
- Reusable water bottles
- Personal misters
- Heat safety pamphlets

Heat kits were placed next to educational materials at the indoor lobby table and brought to community events such as school fairs, senior days and summer festivals.

**Note:** Kit contents may vary based on your facility's specific patient demographics and available funding. Use our [action plans](#) for guidance on how to determine the best supplies for your local community.

#### The Coordinator:

- Demonstrated how to use each item
- Emphasized avoiding outdoor activity during peak heat
- Explained how exercise accelerates dehydration and heating
- Walked parents through symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke in children

Patients, especially parents, expressed gratitude for the clear, simple instructions and appreciated that supplies made the guidance actionable.

### Results

The Coordinator reported a perceived reduction in heat-related visits. Patients were more engaged, asked questions and were able to share tips with others, which further extended the health center's reach.

Tabling proved to be:

- ✓ Low-cost
- ✓ Easy to implement
- ✓ Highly effective for awareness and prevention
- ✓ Adaptable to any community-facing event

By operationalizing HHAP Intervention 1.6, the health center demonstrated that pairing education with tangible tools can significantly strengthen preparedness, especially in communities without community health workers or formal outreach structures.

**Ready to see how these strategies could work in your clinic or health center?** Explore our [toolkit](#) and [action plans](#) for more guidance on how to get your facility and your community ready for extreme heat.