

The Minority Diabetes Prevention Program making strides in North Carolina

N.C. Chronic Disease and Injury Section 2017

Summary

The North Carolina Division of Public Health's Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (OMH) is working in consultation with the Chronic Disease and Injury Section (CDI Section) to increase minority participation in Minority Diabetes Prevention Programs (MDPP). MDPPs are lifestyle change programs created to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Without intervention, up to 30% of people with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years.¹ An estimated 2.5 million North Carolinians are affected by prediabetes with the prevalence being almost 9% in 2013 and continually rising. African Americans and American Indians are about two and half times more likely to die from diabetes than white Americans. In the Qualla Boundary, in western North Carolina, rates of diabetes among the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) are significantly higher than rates of diabetes among the rest of the state. Diabetes prevalence is approximately 10% in North Carolina and a little over 26% in the American Indian population of the EBCI.

Challenge

The challenge for OMH and the CDI Section is to find ways to attract minorities to diabetes prevention programs. Despite disproportionate numbers of minorities that are at risk for developing diabetes, minority participation in DPPs has been historically low.

Solution

To increase participation, DPH is offering a statewide Minority Diabetes Prevention Program (MDPP) through regional coalitions led by local health departments. The coalitions serve as multi-agency collaboratives that include non-profits, local health care organizations and others that have demonstrated the ability to engage the minority community.

Trained lifestyle coaches lead a 12-month MDPP Lifestyle Class designed to encourage and support participants in adopting healthy lifestyle behavior. Topics discussed in these classes include eating healthy, increasing physical activity and managing stress. Childcare and travel expenses are covered for MDPP participants, and a variety of incentives are offered to keep participation high, including, for example, t-shirts to digital food scales and fitness trackers.



Results

This year, twelve new lifestyle coaches were trained and four new MDPP classes implemented in the Qualla Boundary. The classes began in March and are offered at local Cherokee schools, a local health clinic and two at Cherokee Choices, a diabetes prevention program for American Indians. Currently, 65 participants are enrolled in the programs. Throughout the state, a total of 32 MDPP Lifestyle Class series have started at various locations, fourteen of which began in March.

Sustaining Success

Sustaining success of the program means continuing efforts to increase awareness by hosting screening events and community conversations, said Mason. She added that as public health workers, they must also address the barriers related to minority participation in Diabetes Prevention Programs by having conversations with members of the community through public forums.

Reference:

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Diabetes Prevention Program. Accessed at cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/prediabetes-type2/index on February 8, 2017.



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“The rate in which some minority groups are affected by prediabetes and diabetes in North Carolina is increasing,” said Kamaria Mason, Minority Diabetes Prevention Program Specialist. “Our goal is to reverse this trend by increasing awareness and minority participation in Diabetes Prevention Programs like MDPP that prevent or delay the onset of type 2 diabetes.”

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