

RESOURCES FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

How to Engage Healthcare Providers

Healthcare providers are the first line of defense in preventing diabetes. In areas where the demand for healthcare is much greater than the number of available physicians, other providers will be invaluable in reaching patients who are at risk for diabetes.

Providers such as nurses, physician assistants, dietitians, school nurses, and social workers are in a position to recognize the need to step in and influence individuals to adopt healthy behaviors. Providers most likely have already set up a vast network of resources within communities, schools, state and local governments, and other interested groups to help guide and promote diabetes prevention efforts. You may be asking yourself the following questions.

SOUTH DAKOTA



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1. How do I get started?

Many of the outlets you need to promote your message are already available in and around your community. You just need to build a list of contacts. You can start by running a quick Internet search for local clinics and hospitals and contacting a nearby dietitian.

Before you contact providers to ask them to become involved, write a brief pitch on why the program is needed in their area and how they can become involved.

2. How can I make preventing diabetes a team effort?

Create opportunities for healthcare providers to take a personal stake in promoting diabetes prevention. Build a team of professionals committed to supporting the efforts of the National Diabetes Prevention Program. Be sure to include physicians, nurses, pharmacists, diabetes educators, physician assistants, your state Diabetes Prevention and Control Program coordinators, local coalitions and staff from the local organizations implementing the program. Joining forces to generate program interest and support helps to leverage limited resources and maximize reach. Suggestions for team member engagement include:

- Talking to colleagues to encourage program involvement
- Serving as a co-presenter at local, regional, and national professional meetings
- Serving as a spokesperson for the media and community groups
- Disseminating program information and office flyers
- Posting information on websites and in newsletters

3. How do I get the word out to healthcare stakeholders?

One of the best methods for building enthusiasm among healthcare providers is having face-to-face discussions. Get to know those in the community on the front lines of diabetes prevention. Let them know you are a dedicated resource to help build momentum and spread the word of prevention.

- Schedule informal breakfast or lunch meetings with large and small groups of employees of clinics, doctors' offices, hospitals (including emergency rooms), mobile medicine units, school nurses, college health clinics, medical training programs, and medical drop-in centers.

Keep presentations relatively brief. During the meeting, present the research on diabetes prevention as well as the screening guidelines. This is the most opportune time to discuss the strategies to increase patient participation.

- Seek opportunities to speak to large audiences. Almost every sector of healthcare has a professional association with local chapters throughout the country (e.g., South Dakota State Medical Association, South Dakota Academy of Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioner Association of South Dakota), and each of the target audiences has a cultural nurses association with a local presence. Reach out to the groups and ask if you can make presentations at regular and annual meetings and at regional and national conferences.
- Solicit the help of healthcare providers in having their network of colleagues disseminate information and recruit more participants.

4. How do I herald the call to action?

Take advantage of health recognition days and months to promote the program. Recruit healthcare providers to participate in events such as National Nutrition Month (March), National Diabetes Awareness Month (November), and Walk to School Day (October). On healthfinder.gov you will find nationally recognized health awareness opportunities. Be a one-stop resource for an effective recognition program. You could:

- Offer to help put together an awareness kit to pass out to their patients. The kit can be as simple as a folder with facts on diabetes prevention, customizable fact sheets, a diabetes risk test, healthy living tips, and information on finding help.
- Recognize the participating healthcare professionals and award them a certificate of appreciation.

5. How can I get healthcare providers to keep diabetes prevention a priority in their care?

Regular communication keeps diabetes prevention top of mind. Identify preferred modes of communication for the healthcare providers in your community and stay connected!



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