



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

NATIONAL DPP PARTNERSHIP SERIES

Partnership Powers Diabetes Prevention Benefit for South Carolina Workers

Coordinated Partner Action in South Carolina

- **The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control** convened a State Engagement Meeting; guided the S.C. Action Plan; trained coaches; and endorsed the National DPP as the evidence-based lifestyle intervention to address prediabetes in the state.
- **The South Carolina Business Coalition on Health** raised awareness about prediabetes and promoted the business case; chaired the S.C. Action Plan work group on coverage; and promoted the National DPP.
- **The South Carolina Employers** analyzed how diabetes affects their employees, company productivity, and healthcare costs; and implemented National DPP pilot programs.
- **The South Carolina Diabetes Advisory Council** acted as a rallying point for advancing the S.C. Action Plan and a source of work group members and chairs, and endorsed the National DPP as the evidence-based lifestyle intervention to address prediabetes.
- **The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors** used the NACDD/CDC State Engagement Model to recruit key partners to develop and support the S.C. Action Plan; and provided in-depth planning and ongoing technical assistance.
- **The American Medical Association/ American Association of Diabetes Educators** provided technical support for development the S.C. Action Plan and met with interested employers to discuss implementation strategies.

Prediabetes in South Carolina

Prediabetes is on the rise in South Carolina, increasing from 6.7% of South Carolina adults in 2011 to 9.7% in 2014. Without intervention, many of these adults will develop type 2 diabetes. By engaging a diverse group of partners, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the South Carolina Diabetes Advisory Council are advancing coordinated action to prevent diabetes in South Carolina. The DHEC convened a State Engagement Meeting that spurred development of the 2016-2021 Statewide Comprehensive Diabetes Prevention Plan for South Carolina (S.C. Action Plan), which outlines the South Carolina approach to promoting diabetes prevention. Three employers, including the City of Spartanburg, now offer their workers coverage for evidence-based National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change programs.

The [South Carolina Business Coalition on Health](#) (SCBCH), a vital South Carolina diabetes prevention partner, is a nonprofit coalition of businesses whose goal is maximizing the value of the dollars employers spend on healthcare. Lisa Wear-Ellington, President/CEO of SCBCH is a member of the South Carolina Diabetes Advisory Council and chaired the work group that developed the S.C. Action Plan objective on increasing employer and insurer coverage of lifestyle change programs. Building on SCBCH's good relationships with employers, payers and health systems in South Carolina, she raised members' awareness of prediabetes and presented the business case for providing the National DPP lifestyle change program as an employee benefit. One of the S.C. Action Plan objectives calls for at least 10 large employers and at least two large group insurers to begin covering the cost of [National DPP](#) lifestyle change programs for their employees in the state.

Making the Business Case Prompts Action

As a first step toward reaching the coverage objective, SCBCH convened a meeting of large employers who expressed interest in piloting the National DPP as an employee benefit. SCBCH membership includes: employers, such as the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority and South Carolina municipalities and health insurance providers, such as Harvard Pilgrim and Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina. The initial meeting was intended to: educate members about prediabetes and diabetes; to present the rationale for coverage of National DPP lifestyle change programs; and to describe the potential employee and business benefits to be gained from program implementation.

At five, regular Board meetings following the initial presentation, Wear-Ellington reinforced the importance of diabetes prevention by bringing in expert speakers from DHEC, the American Medical Association, and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors to review topics such as: how diabetes affects employee productivity and healthcare costs, what's needed to start a program, and the requirements for becoming a CDC-recognized organization. Speakers answered many member questions about implementing lifestyle change programs including: *How much will it cost? Will employees have to be pulled from the assembly line? Will it make more work for me? How do we identify eligible participants?* Wear-Ellington also addressed the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions to widen awareness of the National DPP, and she continues to provide technical assistance to business coalitions that want to learn from the SCBCH experience.

Spreading the prevention message to an estimated 600,000 readers, the [2017 South Carolina Hospital Guide](#) (part of an annual SCBCH publication series) prominently featured nine pages on the topic of diabetes and diabetes prevention, including this message to employers on the benefits of the National DPP:

By offering participation in a National DPP, your company can enhance its benefits package, drive a healthier workforce, and decrease medical costs associated with prediabetes and diabetes. Look around at your team. If you could help them lead longer, healthier, and more productive lives, wouldn't you do it? Look at your bottom line. If you



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Excerpts from the 2017 South Carolina Hospital Guide

On Assessing Company Risk Related to Prediabetes

An initial risk assessment will help to show just how many employees could potentially benefit from a diabetes prevention program.

There are several ways to get a better sense of your company's prediabetes risk; simply choose the option(s) that work best for you:

- Include prediabetes in health risk assessments and biometric screenings
- Analyze your claims or lab data to estimate the number of those with prediabetes
- Encourage your employees to visit DolhavePrediabetes.org to learn their risk for prediabetes

On the Benefits to Participants

A motivational piece in the Guide tells the story of a South Carolina retiree who joined a National DPP lifestyle change program, became a trained lifestyle coach, herself, and attended her annual doctor visit where the doctor “asked me what I was doing that was improving my health so much.”



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NACDD's Important Role in Diabetes Prevention

A National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) team leads the national effort to apply the NACDD/CDC State Engagement Model to catalyze commitment for collective action on preventing type 2 diabetes. A central feature of the model is a State Engagement Meeting, where NACDD facilitates stakeholders in drafting an action plan. NACDD's 12 to 18 months of strategic consultation and support for State Health Departments enhances partner engagement, bringing in CDC and national partners at strategic points in the process helps maximize results.

This work helps states increase access to and enrollment in National DPP lifestyle change programs. Adherence to an intensive lifestyle change program and modest behavior changes can help adults with prediabetes lose 5% to 7% of their body weight and reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58%. Yet, many people with prediabetes don't have access to these programs because employers, private insurers, and government health plans do not universally cover the program as a wellness or insurance benefit.

could save thousands of dollars over the next three years, wouldn't you do it? It's time to take the next step and become partners in prevention.

The Guide also includes the motivational story of a South Carolina retiree who joined a National DPP lifestyle change program, became a trained lifestyle coach, herself, and described an annual doctor visit where her doctor “asked me what I was doing that was improving my health so much.” As a result of the extensive awareness-building work reaching 150 employers whose benefits cover 850,000 people, three employers set up National DPP lifestyle change programs for their employees — the City of Spartanburg, SCANA Corporation, which is implementing its third lifestyle change program employee cohort, and Contec, a local manufacturer. Employers Health Network, the high-performing network for Harvard Pilgrim in South Carolina, agreed to embed the program in their benefit plans for self-funded clients. Two large employers firmly committed to train on-site staff and to set a target launch date for the National DPP.

The City of Spartanburg Meets the Challenge

The compelling evidence for diabetes prevention presented by SCBCH helped City of Spartanburg benefits administrators understand the value of offering a National DPP lifestyle change program pilot to their employees. They introduced the program to employees by working with DHEC to hold four information sessions and to put on an employee health fair. New employee orientation sessions also describe the program and its benefits.

A wellness program provider operates Spartanburg's health clinic and wellness programs, which serve the more than 400 Spartanburg employees. They developed the lifestyle change program, called Eat, Move, Live, and now have pending recognition status from the [CDC Diabetes Prevention Recognition Program](#). As an incentive for startup, DHEC offered no-cost lifestyle change coach training to help programs meet the requirement to have a trained lifestyle coach. This free training enabled two Spartanburg wellness program physicians and a nurse practitioner to train as coaches. One of these physicians also manages the program and all three trained coaches lead the sessions as part of their regular work

schedule. A small grant provided funds to purchase food scales, body weight scales, and yoga mats, and to pay a yoga instructor. Employees who actively participate in the lifestyle change program can use paid work time to attend the sessions or receive paid overtime for their attendance if the class is held outside of their normal workday. A Session Zero lets employees know what's involved in the program and the class time commitment.

To sustain the program, the wellness provider plans to train additional staff as lifestyle coaches, to develop a patient advocate position whose role will be to advocate for the program, and to explore ways to open the program to eligible participants from the general community. Results and the potential impact of program expansion for this employee population will be presented to the Executive Leadership Team.

Tips for Success in Increasing Employer Coverage of the National DPP

- Take advantage of business coalitions' established relationships with employers and payers to help connect with these important potential partners.
- Talk to employers using the same language and methods for highlighting value that other vendors use.
- Supply in-kind support as an incentive to start programs, such as no-cost training for lifestyle coaches and program materials.
- Keep diabetes prevention on the employer's radar—repetition is valuable. Human resources staff members need reinforcement on the importance of sustaining the programs, on starting new cohorts, and on showcasing positive results to gain support of leadership.
- Offer information on the value of the National DPP to insurance brokers, who are often looking for a way to differentiate themselves from other brokers.
- Identify avenues for implementation that can be customized to employer needs, including free training for on-site staff, utilizing hospital staff trained by the American Association of Diabetes Educators, and community resources, such as Y-USA diabetes prevention programs.

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Since 1988, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors and its more than 7,000 Members have worked to strengthen state-based leadership and expertise for chronic disease prevention and control in all states, territories, and nationally. Learn more at chronicdisease.org.



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