Identifying Contributors to Indian Health Center Diabetes Program Success

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With >300 grantees, SDPI serves ~780K AIANs each year.

The Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) was established in 1997 in response to extreme disparities in diabetes related outcomes for AIANs. The Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley (IHC) is a UHIP and FQHC located in San Jose, CA that serves as an integral part of the healthcare safety net for not only AIANs, but all the area's underserved communities.

In addition to medical, dental, and mental health services, they provide a gathering space for Native community and cultural resources.

Program Population Characteristics

- All IHC AIAN patients who have diabetes are considered in the SDPI population.
  - 69% Female
  - 88% 45 years+ (35% > 65 years)
  - 100% Type 2 Diabetes
  - BMI: 6% < 25 | 72% ≥ 30
  - A1C: 49% < 8 | 10% ≥ 11
  - 10% are on no medications
  - 36% are on insulin
  - 83% also have hypertension
  - 77% have 2 or more DM related conditions*

*BMI≥40, hypertension, Tobacco use, cardiovascular disease, retinopathy, lower extremity amputation, active depression, or chronic kidney disease (stage 3-5).

Assets of Programming

- Interviewed clients and staff are satisfied with the SDPI programming overall
- All express pride and gratitude for the breadth of quality services provided by the health center
- Several benefits for clients of the SDPI program were highlighted by those interviewed, including:
  - Social & material support
  - Trust
  - Individual case management
  - AIAN staff
  - Community gatherings

"They really got out of their way to help us: not just their job, but they really care, you know?"

"When we speak with our patients, it's like we are talking to our aunt or our cousin."

"I'm still on a reservation is what it feels like... our Natives are still struggling out here."

Challenges to Programming

- All interviewees were asked directly and indirectly about ideas they had to improve the SDPI at IHC.
- Neither staff nor clients were able to identify any part of the program they thought was expendable.
- Challenges to SDPI program success include:
  - Loss to follow up
  - Barriers to client engagement - Social determinants - Client beliefs - Client priorities
  - Accessibility

Programming Assets & Challenges

- Most comments around administration were resoundingly positive. Key strengths include:
  - Clear, flexible goals
  - Continuous evaluation
  - Teamwork, support & empowerment

Improving Urban Indian Health

This work highlights the incredible work IHC is doing for Urban AIAN patients in Santa Clara Valley. Through this process ideas for improvements were explicitly and implicitly elucidated.

- Meeting with board of directors to decide which strategies the community wants to invest in on March 23, 2022.
- Potential strategies to improve programming:
  - Build from client’s social/cultural goals
  - Expand multi-generational cultural events
  - Expand nutrition/traditional foods programming
  - Create an organizational standard of accessibility
  - Create a year-long SDPI measure incentive program
- Potential strategies to improve administration:
  - Align priorities through org-wide SDPI awareness
  - EMR training
  - Update & train staff on diabetes policies/procedures
  - Implement SDPI champions at each clinic site