Arkansas

Improving Diabetes Care and Supporting Program Planning and Policy Changes

Public Health Problem

In Arkansas, an estimated 235,000 adults have diabetes, and about 78,300 of them are unaware that they have the disease. For the past 9 years, the prevalence of diabetes in Arkansas had been at or above the national average of about 6.5%.

Program Example

The Arkansas Diabetes Collaborative includes community health centers and health education centers working together to improve diabetes care and outcomes. Collaborators include the Arkansas Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences, and the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care. Nine community health centers and seven area health education centers participated in the collaborative through March 2003. Data from the Cardiovascular/Diabetes Electronic Management System were used to track health care issues such as the number of A1c blood glucose tests, dental examinations, foot examinations, influenza and pneumonia vaccinations, and microalbumin tests received by people with diabetes—services that are recommended for people with diabetes to detect problems early and prevent serious complications. The data were then used to improve the health care provided to people with diabetes, to recruit other clinics to participate, and to support program planning and policy changes.

Implications and Impact

Since the collaborative began, significant improvements have been made in several areas of diabetes care and management. From December 2002 through March 2003, the number of diabetes patients seen in the participating community health centers increased from 503 to 767, and the percentage of patients receiving A1c blood glucose tests in the previous year increased from 77% to 83%. Also encouraging were increases in the percentage of diabetes patients receiving dental examinations (from 10% to 13%), eye examinations (from 16% to 18%), influenza vaccinations (from 26% to 40%), and pneumonia vaccinations (from 12% to 16%).

Contact Information

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