

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Telehealth in the National Diabetes Prevention Lifestyle Change Program

More than 1 in 3 adults in the United States is at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.¹ The National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) provides a framework for type 2 diabetes prevention efforts that includes an evidence-based lifestyle change program (LCP). However, the program is underused because of a lack of access, despite its proven value and cost effectiveness.²

Telehealth holds promise for increasing access to and engaging individuals in National DPP LCP. Telehealth offers people access to affordable health care by using technology such as a computer or smart phone. Technologies used to deliver type 2 diabetes prevention in underserved areas include phones, smartphone apps, computers, texts, and videos. Each can be used, together with live interaction with a trained lifestyle coach, to deliver the National DPP LCP virtually.

Inova, a nonprofit health care system, achieved success using telehealth by streamlining processes to engage and connect participants and create partnerships to increase access to services.

Delivery of the Program

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Started in 2017	CDC Recognition
Combination and Distance Learning	Employer-Based Services

About Inova

Inova is a nonprofit health care system with a network of hospitals, outpatient services, and health care centers across Northern Virginia. Inova's Center for Wellness and Metabolic Health offers comprehensive diabetes education classes and support groups. In 2017, the center started its Inova Diabetes Prevention Program and is currently offering a combined in-person and distance learning program to employees and their spouses. Program participants are located across Inova health system sites. Program participants are predominately female and, on average, 50 years of age.

Telehealth Technology Description

Inova uses CDC's PreventT2 curriculum. Inova's telehealth technology has these main components:

- A mobile app and videoconferencing platform that enable live remote learning using a phone, mobile device, or computer.
- Equipment that includes laptops, cameras, microphones, and display monitors.

Telehealth Program Structure

Participants in the program start with an in-person or distance learning introductory session, which helps reinforce participant commitment and is used to collect baseline information. To provide the best experience, the program design includes the following:

- Classroom meeting space is located at each of Inova's two education centers for participants to attend in-person group sessions.
- One coach that facilitates the sessions gathered at Inova's education center locations. A group of participants attends remotely, and another group attends in-person in the same location as the coach.
- In-person participants weigh in, submit food and physical activity logs, and have discussions with the coach before group sessions begin. Participants attending sessions remotely submit their weight, food log, and activity log electronically.
- A one-hour individual consultation is scheduled with a registered dietitian.



LESSONS FROM THE FIELD: Inova

KEY IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENTS



SPECIALIZED STAFFING

A diverse team of operations and program staff at Inova oversee program delivery in the following ways:

- A director of disease management oversees program operations through Inova's marketing department.
- A program coordinator collects and tracks all participant data across cohorts and serves as a coach.
- Coaches lead in-person and distance learning program sessions and collect participant data. Participants attending in person weigh in before the session and participants attending remotely submit data electronically.
- A director of telemedicine oversees and supports connectivity among locations, coaches, and participants.
- Telemedicine information technology staff manage the day-to-day troubleshooting related to the telehealth platform and assist participants, via phone and email, and with device set-up.



TAILORED CURRICULUM AND CONTENT DESIGN

Inova has tailored the educational experience for combination delivery by:

- Providing PowerPoint presentations to support session content and group discussions.
- Providing paper and electronic versions of the PreventT2 participant handouts.



FLEXIBLE IMPLEMENTATION

To encourage enrollment, engagement, and retention, the following features are offered:

- The option to join each session in person or via distance learning.
- A rolling enrollment with a new cohort starting after 16 to 18 participants are enrolled.
- Scheduled sessions at lunch, in the late afternoon, and in the evening at times convenient to participants.
- Multiple referral mechanisms including self-referral, physician referral, and referral during annual employee wellness screenings.
- Incentives that include free enrollment and insurance premium reductions for Inova employees who qualify for and complete the program.
- Personalized reminder, check-in, and motivational emails.
- One-on-one make-up sessions with the coach by telephone.



DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

Inova helps to:

- Manage participant data using excel spreadsheets.
- Review data weekly to assess individual- and cohort-level progress.

LESSONS LEARNED

- **Program and Participant Coordination**
Investing in online tools, platforms, and software that automate or streamline program processes, such as data collection, reduces the burden on a small program staff, improves data quality and analysis capabilities, and positions programs for expansion.
- **Program Design**
This program provides participants with options to engage in a way most conducive to their lifestyle and to have a voice in cohort scheduling decisions. This contributes to participants' retention, satisfaction, and overall success in the program.
- **Evidence for Effectiveness**
Creating a comprehensive data collection protocol is important to assess participants' knowledge as well as behavioral and clinical outcomes..

Learn More About the National DPP LCP at

Inova

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¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2020*. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services; 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pdfs/data/statistics/national-diabetes-statistics-report.pdf>. Accessed March 1, 2021.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The National Diabetes Prevention Program website. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/index.html>. Accessed March 1, 2021.

The systematic screening and assessment method was used to identify and learn about the use of telehealth in the National Diabetes Prevention Program lifestyle change program.