

Salinas's Steps Program

Improving the delivery of diabetes care



What is the public health problem?

Diabetes is a growing public health concern in Salinas. If not properly managed, diabetes can lead to serious complications such as blindness, kidney damage, lower-limb amputations, and cardiovascular disease. According to 2006* Steps Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data,

- 7% of adults in Salinas reported that they have doctor-diagnosed diabetes.
- Nearly 64% classified themselves as either overweight or obese, placing them at risk of developing diabetes.

How Steps is responding

An effective and sustainable system that provides enhanced treatment and diabetes self-management skills for patients was created.

- The Salinas Steps Program worked with seven local Federally Qualified Health Centers and community-based health care providers to implement a Patient Electronic Care System that covers more than 31,000 patients.
- Participating clinics document and monitor patient health information, such as when patients are due to have recommended foot and eye examinations or A1c tests. Clinics also identify monthly outcome measures to track and provide follow-up assistance.
- Uninsured patients are enrolled in reduced-cost or free prescription assistance programs.

- Quality assurance studies are conducted regularly to ensure providers are helping patients effectively manage their diabetes.

What is the impact?

Participating clinics have shown significant progress in helping patients manage their diabetes. From September 2003 to April 2006, the percentage of patients who had

- Controlled blood pressure increased from 32% to 40%.
- Dilated eye exams increased from 24% to 48%.
- Foot exams increased from 25% to 32%.

Why this program is working

Early detection, improved preventive care practices, and better education on diabetes self-management can help people with diabetes control their levels of blood glucose, blood pressure, and blood lipids, which helps reduce the occurrence of diabetes complications. The Task Force on Community Preventive Services found that disease management interventions are effective in improving glycemic control among people with diabetes.[†]

* Most recent data available

[†] <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/diabetes/dm-int-disease-mgt.pdf>