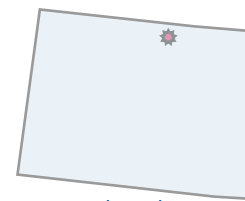


Weld County's Steps Program

Improving diabetes prevention and management among Hispanic residents



Colorado

What is the public health problem?

Physical inactivity and a lack of diabetes prevention and management services for Hispanics are important health issues in Weld County, Colorado.

- More than a quarter (27%) of the county population is Hispanic*—a population that is twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to have diabetes.
- Diabetes management education programs that are culturally and linguistically tailored to the Hispanic community are needed to help sustain increases in physical activity levels and healthy eating habits.
- Inactivity is related to dangerous consequences earlier in life for Hispanic women than for their non-Hispanic counterparts.

How Steps is responding

The Steps Program is collaborating with local partners to provide ongoing Cultural Competency trainings related to health care delivery. These trainings, offered in conjunction with Diabetes Disparity programming, are designed to improve patient satisfaction with care in diverse populations and reduce health-related disparities. Steps also is using pláticas (small group educational chats or conversations) to deliver diabetes prevention and management education.

- A mobile medical van brings much-needed diabetes and other health services to community residents. Trained educators conduct pláticas on diabetes prevention in residents' homes and work sites—even for farm workers in fields.

- To address physical inactivity among women, Steps also supports Zumba fitness classes that incorporate Latin and international music and dance movements.

What is the impact?

- Plática Project participants increased their knowledge about ways to prevent or control diabetes by improving nutrition and increasing physical activity.
- Steps funding leveraged in-kind donations of Spanish-language media messages that directly reach the target audience with important information about diabetes prevention and treatment.
- To date, the pláticas program has reached approximately 1,900 people. Customizing the information specifically for Hispanics contributes to the community's collective knowledge about the disease.
- 225 Latinas enrolled in the Zumba classes, which they describe as “exercise in disguise.”

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.[†]

* CDC, Snapshots of Data for Communities Nationwide, 2006.

[†] http://www.ndep.nih.gov/diabetes/pubs/TipsFeel_Eng.pdf