New Hampshire Adults with Disabilities Need Better Diabetes Prevention Care

Promising diabetes prevention care for adults with disabilities includes accessible and inclusive health promotion, such as:

- Healthy eating support and counseling to emphasize how and why to make good food choices
- Guidelines and encouragement to engage in regular physical activity
- Activation of caregivers and family members to ensure knowledgeable, participatory supports

In New Hampshire, adults with mobility and cognitive limitations are significantly more likely to experience diabetes (26%) than adults with no disability (9%).¹ The disparity in diabetes prevalence results in higher costs to Medicaid programs and poorer health outcomes and quality of life for people with disabilities.² Several factors contribute to a higher risk of diabetes, including:

- Unhealthy eating habits that result, in part, from uninformed and limited food choices;
- Lack of physical activity due to social, environmental, and behavioral barriers; and
- Lack of knowledge and support to address risk factors for diabetes.²

“I eat a lot of microwaved food. Preparing the food is the most difficult. I also need to learn portion control. I’d rather eat junk food than a meal sometimes, my head says no and my mouth says yes. I would need some kind of check list to help me better… I would love to be able to go to the gym more often but I don’t always have someone to assist me… I would really like an exercise routine I could do at home.”

Doug lives in Dover, NH and has cerebral palsy

References

The NH Disability & Public Health Project (DPH) is working to improve the health and wellness of people with disabilities. Program highlights include:

- Developing educational materials for caregivers and family members of individuals with intellectual disabilities participating in the evidence-based InSHAPE® physical activity and nutrition program; and

- Adapting National Diabetes Prevention Program materials and training program staff to improve accessibility and inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities & mobility limitations.

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Alternative formats available on request.

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