# Scalable Models to Promote Disease Self-Management
Monitoring, messaging and managing: High-tech + peer support = success

Improving outcomes and quality of life for people with diabetes

Implementation research funded by the Gillings Gift for developing scalable models to promote self-management in populations with diabetes and other chronic diseases will improve clinical outcomes and quality of life. Previous research has shown the benefits of peer support in diabetes but not how to "scale up" these approaches to "make a dent" in the 387 million people with diabetes worldwide. This project will use e-Health systems that monitor status and progress and offer tailored messaging to guide behaviors to extend the reach and efficiency of peer support.
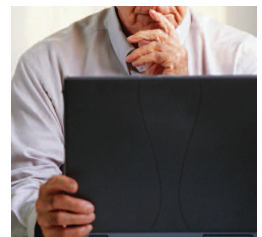
• *Phase One: Qualitative research*

Qualitative formative research with patients, clinicians and managers will refine key elements of how e-Health systems can be incorporated in peer support. What will patients think about using e-Health applications on their computer or smartphone to help stay on target with their diabetes management? When do they prefer a live peer supporter and when are their e-Health tools sufficient or preferred? Electronic health (e-Health) systems can monitor status and progress and offer tailored messaging to guide behaviors and outcomes.

• *Phase Two: Developing infrastructure*

Based on Phase One, a specific protocol will be developed to incorporate BlueStar®, WellDoc's industry leading e-Health tool for diabetes management, into peer support as a way of enhancing the efficiency, reach, and effectiveness of the peer support intervention for diabetes and other health issues.

• *Phase Three: Evaluation*

A three-month acceptability test will be conducted on 200 patients to determine usage patterns, attractiveness, convenience and benefits of the combination of peer support and BlueStar®. Cross-checking with other similar research in China and Australia will add global benchmarking to produce publications and grant proposals for larger studies of peer support/e-Health integration.

Leadership

Edwin Fisher, PhD, is professor in the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health's Department of Health Behavior and global director of Peers for Progress, a program designed to build an evidence base for peer support interventions, disseminate resources for program development and quality improvement, and promote the integration of peer support in health care and preventive services worldwide.

IMPACT!

Discovering the potential effectiveness of integrating "high tech" and the "soft touch" of peer support can be a game-changer for people with diabetes and other chronic diseases. The first research project of its kind, this Gillings Innovation Lab will help create a collaborative approach to managing these conditions, locally and internationally, through our critical research partners around the globe.

GOAL
To develop scalable models integrating peer support with e-Health and improve outcomes and quality of life in those with diabetes or other chronic diseases.

PARTNERS
WellDoc, Inc. with its BlueStar® e-Health applications for diabetes management
Vanguard Medical Group and Horizon BCBS of New Jersey
The UNC Center for Diabetes Translational Research to Reduce Health Disparities
Brian Oldenburg, University of Melbourne
Beijing Diabetes Prevention and Treatment Association