

Factors That Influence Community Pharmacy Adoption of Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Programs

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Abstract

Diabetes imposes a significant societal and public health burden — more than 100 million Americans live with diabetes (30.3 million) or prediabetes (84.1 million). Developing type 2 diabetes is a gradual, but preventable process. While many strategies exist to address prediabetes, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Diabetes Prevention Program is the largest, evidence-based effort to deliver a lifestyle change program to communities across the United States.

As public health stakeholders look to lessen the burden of diabetes, ensuring that prevention programs are high quality and adequately utilized is important. One opportunity for partnership is with pharmacies. Pharmacists are medication experts whose traditional role has expanded to include delivery of patient care services. Many pharmacies offer walk-in services and hours that typically extend beyond that of physician offices into nights and weekends.

This study identified factors that influence whether community pharmacy decision makers adopt diabetes prevention programs, including screening and implementation of a lifestyle change program. The principal investigator conducted 22 semi-structured interviews with pharmacy decision makers, excluding one interview. The 21 participants included 11 independent and 10 chain pharmacy decision makers.

Most study participants said their company currently offers diabetes prevention programs, while the rest had previously offered such programs or had never offered them. The principal investigator identified the following findings: (1) Financial feasibility and sustainable reimbursement models are critical for adoption of diabetes prevention programs, with grant funding a catalyst most commonly utilized by independent pharmacies and grocery stores with pharmacies; (2) Inadequate consumer participation in diabetes prevention programs is problematic, but pharmacies are committed to solving this issue; (3) Operational fit is important and appropriate use of non-pharmacists is essential to adoption and success of diabetes prevention programs; (4) Customer loyalty is a top advantage gained by pharmacy adopters of diabetes prevention programs, but specific characteristics of grocery stores that made delivery of those programs easier was an advantage not seen in other settings; and (5) Pharmacies are focused on expanding healthcare access to at-risk populations and collaborating with healthcare teams. This study can inform future public health practice, policy, and research.

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