

Program: DIABETES

A Success Story!

Do I? Don't I? Finding You're At Risk is Step One!

Rockland County, NY, January 2008— After four years, Rockland County's Diabetes Program, part of Steps to a HealthierNY (Steps), has made great inroads dealing with this chronic disease, the incidence of which has increased dramatically.

The percentage of adults over 18 in Rockland County who say they have been told by their doctor that they have diabetes increased from 5.8% to 7.3% in two short years. Although this might not appear to be a positive change, only about a third of adults with diabetes know they have it. One of the goals of Steps is to increase identification of residents with diabetes and pre-diabetes.

The program has reached out to medical providers across the county to increase the quality of diabetes care and prevention in Rockland County. Through an academic detailing program, 17 primary care provider offices have made 52 significant changes that will continue to improve the care offered to their patients. The medical offices were provided with technical assistance and materials to prevent diabetes and improve diabetes management in their practices. Many physician offices now display foot check posters in examination rooms to remind patients with diabetes to remove their socks and shoes, identify patients with pre-diabetes by using chart stickers, use the term 'pre-diabetes' with patients, and provide patient education resources including the Rockland County Diabetes Resource Guide, a free booklet of locally available diabetes-related services. In addition more physicians are referring patients to podiatrists and ophthalmologists or to the County's only certified diabetes education program at Nyack Hospital.

The good news is that in Rockland County, recent data showed that county residents visiting private health care provider offices are already meeting or close to the national health goals of 'Healthy People 2010' for management of diabetes! According to the 2006 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 7.3 % of residents have been diagnosed with diabetes, 65.4% of patients with diabetes check their blood glucose at least once per day, 90% have checked their Hemoglobin A1C, blood glucose levels, at least twice in the past year, 79.7% have had an eye exam in the past year, and 66% check their feet daily.

To reach out to our medically underserved population, Steps to a HealthierNY is assisting the Department of Health (DOH) in addressing the needs of their General Medical Clinic. A Certified Diabetes Educator recently provided staff education and tools to improve patient care and, with the support of the New York Diabetes Coalition, the clinic is implementing an electronic registry system to better manage patients with diabetes.

Residents interested in learning more about their risk for diabetes can contact the Department of Health to request an American Diabetes Association approved (paper and pencil) risk test. In addition, residents with diabetes can request educational materials including a copy of the Rockland County Diabetes Resource Guide.

For more information call the Rockland County DOH at 845-364-2500
or visit the STEPS website at www.rocklandsteps.org