

Inter-sectoral Approach to Diabetes Prevention and Management (New Zealand-Government)

http://www.letsbeatdiabetes.org.nz/page/diabetes_5.php

Section I: Summary

Reducing the incidence and impact of diabetes is one of 13 health goals identified in the New Zealand Health Strategy. In 2005 one New Zealand District Health Board initiated "Let's Beat Diabetes," a 5-year inter-sectoral partnership, as a 'whole society, whole life course, whole family' approach to reduce the incidence, harm and costs of Type 2 diabetes. The program is aimed at long-term structural changes by involving many sectors within the community, especially involvement at the family level.

Section II: Statement of Purpose

Let's Beat Diabetes is a multi-faceted program administered by the Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) involving different incentives for the various stakeholder sectors involved. At the onset of the program, the inter-sectoral, collaborative nature helped to promote a high level of 'buy-in' and agreement among stakeholders. The inter-sectoral approach includes local government; the transport sector; the food industry; church leaders; Maori, Pacific Island and Asian communities; schools and sports organizations, and many public and private health sector organizations. At its core, the program takes a 'whole society/whole family/whole life' approach that recognizes that an individual is part of a family/community which has a direct influence on environmental risks, choices and decisions. Therefore, wherever possible, working with families is central to the program.

The program focuses on ten Action Areas which reflect a variety of intervention strategies to reduce risk and improvement management of diabetes. The ten Action Areas are:

1. Supporting community leadership and action
2. Promoting behavior change through social marketing
3. Changing urban design to support health, active lifestyles
4. Supporting a health environment through food industry accord
5. Strengthening health promotion co-ordination and activity
6. Enhancing well child services to reduce childhood obesity
7. Developing a schools accord to ensure children are fit, healthy and ready to learn
8. Supporting primary case-based prevention and early intervention
9. Enabling vulnerable families to make healthier choices
10. Improving service integration and care for advanced disease.

Let's Beat Diabetes aims to address these action areas through more than 65 different initiatives throughout the Counties Manukau District. Initiatives include:

- Participation in the Heartbeat Challenge which encourages healthy work environments through exercise programs, healthy food policy for workplace vending machines, etc.
- Schools/Early Childhood Nutrition Program which funds projects such as school gardens.
- Improving School Lunches and Nearby Dairies program which promotes healthy eating in schools.
- Swap 2 Win, a social marketing program with radio, print, billboard and other media campaigns designed to get individuals involved in dialogue about changing behaviors to prevent or delay diabetes.
- Development of a Healthy Recipes Cookbook for Maaori families.
- Support of regular walking excursions and exercise groups, in collaboration with other organizations such as the Parenting Network.

Section III: Outcomes

Let's Beat Diabetes received \$10 million NZ dollars for program implementation and evaluation. The most current evaluation in 2008 showed a clear shift in the way that the program is perceived by some of the key stakeholders. After four years of program activity, there has been some shift away from the broader vision of a whole community, inter-sectoral approach to a more task and process-based approach. While each of the ten Action Areas has shown some success on the level of individual intervention strategies, the program has faced challenges in sustaining the vision of a full community collaboration and partnership, and some partnerships have become strained. National policy and competitive funding have also influenced the direction of program initiatives, as well as expectations of accountability faced by public health initiatives. These factors may also subsequently affect outcomes.

Most Action Areas are seeing success in certain key performance indicators, especially in the food industry, social marketing, primary care and schools. This includes increases in specific outcome measures of participation in healthy life style activities as well as increased collaboration between some entities such as the food industry and the District Health Board. However, the ongoing challenge appears to be sustaining the collaborative community vision and approach in light of the accountability requirements faced by health and other public sector programs.

Section IV: Additional Resources

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Broadbent, Rebecca, Janet Clinton and Toni Ashton, "An inter-sectoral approach to diabetes: evaluation," 2008, [*Health Policy Monitor*](#).

CHSRP, L. Wilkinson-Meyers, J. Clinton, F. Mahoney, "An inter-sectoral approach to diabetes," 2006, [*Health Policy Monitor*](#).

Let's Beat Diabetes Program Update October 2008,

<http://www.letsbeatdiabetes.co.nz/file/Newsletters/let-s-beat-diabetes-update-oct.pdf>.