

# NATIONAL PROGRAM TO ELIMINATE DIABETES -RELATED DISPARITIES IN VULNERABLE POPULATIONS: 2010-2015

Communities in Action: National Kidney Foundation of Michigan



## Who is working to reduce diabetes in African American communities?

The National Kidney Foundation of Michigan (NKFM) has a rich history of working to address diabetes-related health disparities in minority populations. The NKFM Communities Against Diabetes program

uses a coordinated approach that employs policy and environmental change to transform African American communities into places that address social determinants of health while promoting healthy lifestyle choices to people living with type 2 diabetes.



## Why is NKFM working to reduce diabetes in African American communities?

Diabetes is epidemic among the African American population.

African Americans, both male and female, have higher rates of diabetes than whites. This project addresses diabetes disparities in the following Michigan communities: Flint, Inkster, and Detroit. All three communities have higher than average rates of diabetes (12%-14% as compared with the Michigan average of 8.5%), large African American populations (65.4%, 67.5%, and 92% respectively), and multiple social barriers to health, including low socioeconomic status, high unemployment rates, low education levels, and high crime rates.

In 2011, the prevalence of diabetes among African American adults ages 18-44 years living in Michigan was 5.0%, twice that of their White counterparts at 2.5%



National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
Division of Diabetes Translation

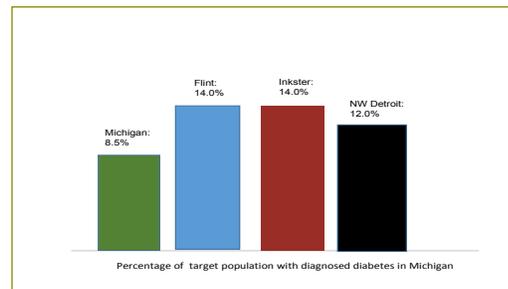


## How is NKFM working to reduce diabetes in African American communities?

### Community Mobilization to Action

The NKFM leveraged local partnerships in Flint, Inkster, and Detroit to form a coalition in each community consisting of representatives from multi-sector organizations and other stakeholders.

- Flint Better Health Together coalition is committed to promoting healthy living and positive choices to decrease the unequal impact of diabetes in their community.
- Northwest Detroit Community Against Diabetes coalition is dedicated to promoting health equity through policy-making, environmental changes, community awareness and action.
- Inkster Partnership for a Healthier Community aims to improve and develop safe, healthy, and educated neighborhoods through community action and resources.



### Sharing Resources and Building Skills to Address Health Challenges

- The NKFM held trainings with each coalition about what social determinants and health disparities were, and the overall impact of social determinants on health disparities.
- The NKFM partnered with each coalition to conduct community wide health assessments. NKFM guided the community health assessment process but let the coalition and community members identify what activities were going to be done.
- The NKFM held a grant writing seminar for each coalition to assist them in obtaining funding for their activities.

## Community Interventions

### Diabetes Self-Management Education

The NKFM facilitates Diabetes PATH workshops (Diabetes Self-management Education [DSME]) across the three communities in Michigan.

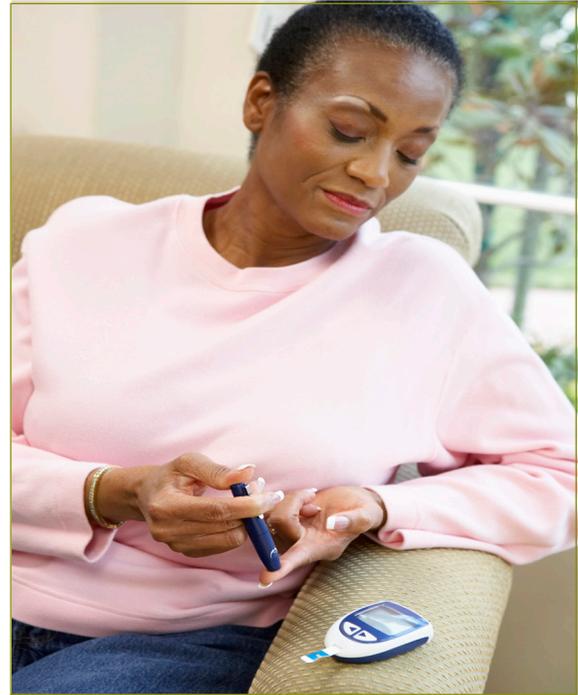
- Presently, there are 64 partners referring participants to DSME workshops across the three communities.
- Typically, the biggest challenge for Diabetes PATH workshops is recruiting participants. With the help of the NKFM more than 300 residents have participated in the workshops.
- The CDC Vulnerable Populations funding allowed the NKFM to recruit and train more than 30 community health workers to facilitate DSME workshops.



## Policy Change

- The NKFM has worked with the Flint county health department to reward restaurants for adopting healthy menus. The NKFM and coalitions worked with the county health department to adopt the criteria for restaurant assessment. The county health department has distributed more than 30 awards to exemplary restaurants that are committed to providing their customers with healthier menus.

- In Inkster, a new walking path called The Greenway, was completed in October 2013. NKFM, along with the Inkster Partnership for a Healthier Community, is credited with gathering support and meeting with the city council and mayor to increase their awareness of how this initiative helps reduce the overall effects of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, and supports safe and active living spaces within the community.
- In Flint, to encourage physical activity, the NKFM and members of the Flint Better Health Together coalition are working with the city to adopt a Complete Streets policy. The policy supports street designs that enable safe access or all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and physical abilities.



### **NKFM lessons learned for implementing diabetes programs in African American communities.**

- Face-to-face time is important. The community must be familiar, comfortable, and trusting of the coalition.
- Faith-based work can reap huge benefits. However, you must have buy-in and the commitment of church leadership.
- Efforts serving the same target populations (i.e., African American communities), may require different approaches. A sweeping approach cannot be adopted for all communities because each one has different power dynamics, cultures, and priorities.
- Reciprocity is important. The community should be involved in all efforts, but also should be offered something in return that will benefit them in other areas of interest.
- Hire individuals from within the community and invest in the community you are in with your resources and time.
- Consistency in management staff is important. Relationships have to be re-established when a new staff member comes on board. Also, it takes extra time to build community trust of the new staff member.

### **TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATIONAL KIDNEY FOUNDATION OF MICHIGAN AND THE COMMUNITIES AGAINST DIABETES PROGRAM, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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