

# The Medicare Diabetes Screening Project: A National Drive to Find the Undiagnosed

Presentation to the DMICC  
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Jerry Franz



A National Drive to  
Find the Undiagnosed  
**MedicareDiabetes**  
Screening Project

# What Is It?

A public-private partnership designed to:

- Encourage seniors age 65 and older to get tested for diabetes, using new Medicare diabetes screening benefits that became available in 2005
- Increase awareness of these benefits among primary care providers and encourage them to “think diabetes” and screen appropriately

# Who's Behind It?

## Partners:

Administration on Aging

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Physician Assistants

American Association of Diabetes Educators

American Clinical Laboratory Association

American College of Physicians

American Diabetes Association (Co-Chair)

American Dietetic Association

America's Health Insurance Plans – AHIP

American Medical Association

Avalere Health

Center for Health Transformation

Disease Management Association of America

Healthcare Leadership Council

Healthways

National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of State Units on Aging

National Black Nurses Association

National Council on Aging

Novo Nordisk Inc. (Co-Chair)

Nurse Practitioner Healthcare Foundation

Preventive Health Partnership

Vision Service Plan - VSP

# Our Mission

- For both the American Diabetes Association and Novo Nordisk, this project is mission-related
- Contributing to reducing the burden of diabetes on seniors through early detection and treatment, and primary prevention or delay of onset

# Our Goals

- Increase usage of the diabetes screening benefits authorized by Congress in 2005 (in the long term), as measured by CMS data
- Go “upstream” in disease management and reach seniors with pre-diabetes and undiagnosed diabetes, and their providers, with messages about diabetes detection, prevention and treatment
- Gain understanding of provider-patient interactions regarding diabetes detection and any counseling based on results of testing

# Our Vision of Success

- Providers order diabetes testing for those at risk, not just those with symptoms
- Groups inform seniors about diabetes risk factors and urge them to ask their doctors about screening
- CMS, CDC and other federal, state, and local agencies aggressively promote Medicare diabetes screenings and preventive services
- Seniors become more active about their health, learn and know their risk for diabetes, and use screening benefits
- Those with pre-diabetes get access to necessary prevention services

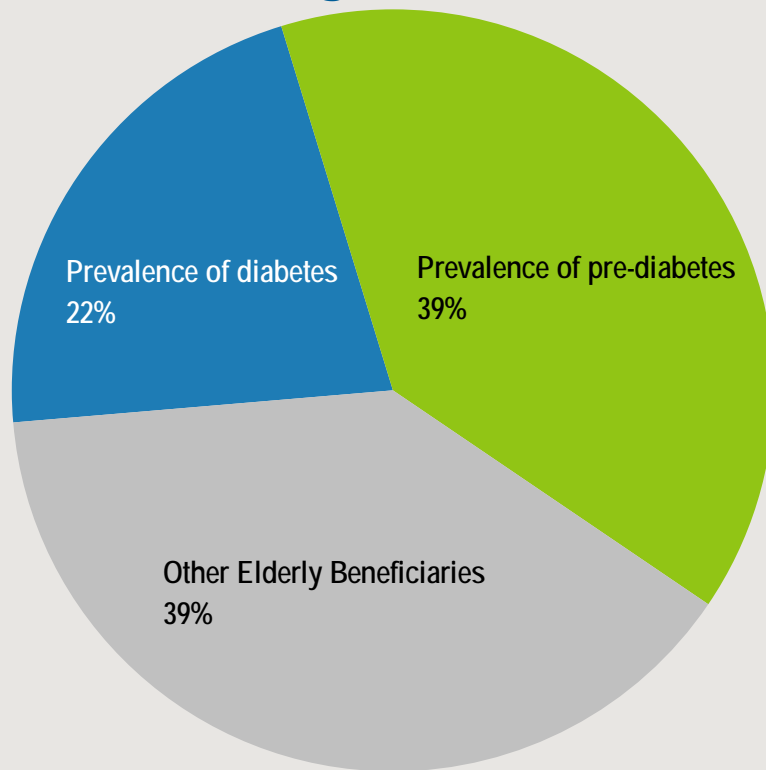
# Why This Project? Why Now?

- Need is great
- Relatively low utilization of new 2005 benefits
- ADA, Novo Nordisk lobbied for these benefits and would like to see them used
- CMS interested in promoting prevention benefits – Healthier US initiative
- Novo Nordisk commitment under Clinton Global **Initiative**



# Detailed Data on Seniors

## Americans Age 65 or Older<sup>1</sup>:



## Diabetes Facts<sup>2</sup>:

- Of the estimated 35 million Medicare beneficiaries age 65 or older<sup>3</sup>, **61% or 21 million have diabetes or pre-diabetes**
- More than 2 million Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes are undiagnosed; **virtually all of 14 million Medicare beneficiaries with pre-diabetes are undiagnosed**

<sup>1</sup>Source: Cowie, C.C., et al. "Prevalence of Diabetes and Impaired Fasting Glucose in Adults in the U.S. Population." *Diabetes Care* 29(2006): 1263-1268

<sup>2</sup>Analysis assumes that rates of diabetes for Medicare beneficiaries are the same as rates for all americans aged 65 or older.

<sup>3</sup>Source: "Medicare at a Glance." *Medicare Fact Sheet*. September 2005. Kaiser Family Foundation. 8 Feb 2007 <<http://www.kff.org/medicare/upload/1066-08.pdf>>.

# What's the Benefit?

- **Medicare covers a free, annual test for anyone age 65 and over with one diabetes risk factor**
  - Hypertension
  - High cholesterol
  - Obesity or overweight (BMI > 25)
  - Family history of diabetes
  - History of gestational diabetes or giving birth to a baby weighing more than 9 lbs.
- **Two screening tests per year for those with pre-diabetes**

# Diabetes Screening under Medicare

- **No co-payment or deductible required**
- **Ordered by a:**
  - Physician
  - Physician's assistant
  - Nurse practitioner
  - Clinical nurse specialist
- **Fasting Plasma Glucose (PPG) or**
- **Oral Glucose Tolerance Test (OGTT)**



## Our Approach

- Work with and through our partners
- Hit the ground running while simultaneously conducting market research
- Interventions in Georgia and New Hampshire to test methods and messages
- We're learning for the future

## Pilot Initiative: Columbus, Georgia

- Launched on July 19, 2007 (with CMS, Healthier US bus tour involvement)
- Radio and print advertising support for the launch
- Religious community outreach (Fellowship Luncheon on September 13, 2007)
- Civic and community group involvement (VFW, American Legion)
- Reaching out to Providers (dinner for doctors with CareSouth on September 27, 2007)
- Collaboration with the local Area Agency on Aging (shopping mall exhibits in September-October 2007)

## Further CMS Collaboration

- CMS regional office in Atlanta has chosen the Medicare Diabetes Screening Project in Columbus, Georgia to be its “Prevention Challenge” for the state of Georgia
- This occurred after the CMS Prevention Tour (“A Healthier US Starts Here”) had swung through Georgia; each regional CMS office was asked to designate a key partner to focus on prevention and healthy living

# Consumer Brochure

## Some Small Steps To Get You Started

Ask your doctor or other health care provider about a free test to see if you have diabetes or pre-diabetes. And do it soon.

For more information, call the  
Columbus Research Foundation at Endocrine Consultants  
706-322-1700, ext. 119

### For information about diabetes and pre-diabetes:

American Diabetes Association  
1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383)  
www.diabetes.org

The National Diabetes Education Program  
1-800-438-5383  
www.ndep.nih.gov

Medicare  
1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)  
www.medicare.gov/health/diabetes.asp



Supported by a grant from Novo Nordisk Inc.

## “Could I have diabetes and not know it?”



### Now seniors can get a free screening test and find out.

As you get older, your risk for type 2 diabetes increases. Most people who are age 65 or older are at risk for type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes.

The next time you see your doctor or other health care provider, ask about a free test for diabetes, covered by Medicare.



## Knowing Is Better Than Not Knowing

In Columbus, Georgia, some 12,000 seniors don't know that they have diabetes or pre-diabetes. Could you be one of them?

Get checked for diabetes. If you find out that you do have diabetes, you can begin to take care of it.

You can work with your doctor and other health care providers to get in control of your diabetes. Good control can reduce your chances of a heart attack, stroke, blindness, kidney disease, or amputations.



After getting checked, you might instead learn that you have pre-diabetes. If so, you can take steps to prevent diabetes from happening in the first place.



## Medicare Covers Testing For Diabetes

Most people age 65 or older can get a free test for diabetes, once a year.

If you learn that you have pre-diabetes, you can get another free test for diabetes six months later. And if you lose a little weight, and get more physical activity, you can greatly increase your chances of preventing diabetes.



# Columbus, Georgia Pilot Project

## Columbus Media Clip

- WOKS-AM
- WGSY-FM
- WKCN-FM
- WDAK-FM
- WRLD-FM
- WEAM-FM

## Could you have diabetes and not know it?

**If you're 65 or older, you need to know about free diabetes screening and Medicare.**

In Columbus, Georgia, alone, some 12,000 seniors don't know that they have diabetes or pre-diabetes. Could you be one of them?

If you're 65 or over — or have a loved one who is — talk to your doctor, clinic or other health care provider about free screening for diabetes through Medicare.

It's the smartest step you can take to prevent diabetes, or to treat it effectively. And controlling diabetes is the best way to reduce the chance of a heart attack, stroke, blindness, amputations or kidney disease.

Join our effort for a healthier Columbus. Ask your doctor or other health care provider about a free test to see if you have diabetes or pre-diabetes. And do it soon.



**See the Medicare Prevention & Wellness Bus and Get a Free Pedometer!\***

**Columbus Civic Center**  
**Thursday, July 19**  
**1 - 3 PM**

**Free Refreshments! Entertainment!**  
**Free T-shirts! Prizes!**  
**See you there!**



A National Drive to End the Disparities  
**Medicare Diabetes Screening Project**

Supported by a grant from Novartis Nordisk Inc.

\*This event is open to the general public; no registration required, and begins at 11AM at the Columbus Civic Center, 400 4th Street, Columbus, GA. The Medicare Prevention & Wellness Bus arrives at 2PM.

**Medicare Diabetes**  
 Screening Project

# “Agencies Kick-Off Diabetes Program”



# “Health tour makes stop in Columbus”

BY KAFFIE SLEDGE

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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services brought their "Healthier US Starts Here" tour to the Columbus Civic Center on Thursday.

Mayor Jim Wetherington, members of the local legislative delegation and representatives of the Healthy Columbus Project were among those who welcomed the tour. More than 100 seniors were also present.

The purpose of the tour is to raise awareness of preventive benefits available through Medicare, and to encourage recipients to speak to their doctors about available services and screenings, said Dr. Richard W. Wild, chief medical officer of CMS, Atlanta.

The tour is a national initiative that's calling attention to the prevention benefits Medicare covers.

"In the past, Medicare didn't cover prevention. It only covered treatment for disease," Wild said. "Now we are stressing that people can benefit so much by discovering diseases early, preventing diseases and preventing the complications of chronic diseases; because chronic disease complications count for more than 70 percent of the Medicare spending."

Part of the "Healthier US" initiative is to raise awareness of the importance of preventing chronic disease and illness, such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Congress recently expanded Medicare's coverage to include more preventative health screening benefits. While the primary benefit is to promote health to seniors, the initiative is aimed at the entire family. Staying healthy and maintaining a healthy life reduces health care spending, Wild said.

Staying on top of screenings

Wild is an emergency medicine specialist who practiced at Fort Benning's Martin Army Community Hospital, both as a military and civilian doctor. He said his current goal is to keep people out of the emergency room.

"We can do that by preventing the complications of diabetes," he said. "One of the big pushes we're doing here in Columbus is a diabetes screening."

In Georgia, diabetes affects one of every five people. That's about 19 percent of those older than 65. It's an even bigger problem in the black and Hispanic population. Blacks have a one in three chance of developing diabetes after age 65, Wild said.

"Obesity is a serious issue, but more serious are the chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, that are a result of obesity," said Clara Cobb, a nurse practitioner who is regional health administrator. The Kendrick High School graduate also works out of Atlanta.

More than 50 percent of adults don't get enough exercise. And 25 percent are not active in their leisure time. Obesity has now reached epidemic proportions, with one in three adults 20 and older -- 66 million people -- classified as obese, Cobb said.

The percentage of overweight young people has tripled since 1980. A third of young people in grades 9-12 are not engaged in any vigorous activity.

"Another benefit we're trying to promote is flu shots," Wild said. "Flu shots are free -- no co-pay for Medicare beneficiaries. Unfortunately, one of every three Medicare beneficiaries is not taking advantage of this. Thousands of people die each year because of influenza, and 200,000 are hospitalized."

Wild also stresses pneumonia shots and cardiovascular screenings, in addition to screenings for colon cancer, prostate cancer, breast cancer and cervical cancer. Women who haven't had complete hysterectomies need annual pelvic exams and pap smears, he said.

"There's also an initial wellness screening with people's doctors when they first come on to Medicare. That's a free, comprehensive preventive-based physical," Wild said.

Staying proactive

Wednesday, the tour bus was in Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tenn. Today it will be back in Atlanta, then it heads for Florida.

"It is not just for Medicare beneficiaries," Wild said. "It's for their families, too. Some people may not have access to a computer, but their loved ones do. And we want the children and grandchildren to be proactive in making sure mom and dad, grandma and grandpa get the care they need."

People with questions may call 1-800-MEDICARE. Counselors are available for personal advice. Or they can visit the Web site, [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). There is also a personal Web site -- [www.mymedicare.gov](http://www.mymedicare.gov) -- that allows people to track their own preventative screening measures. It's password protected -- users can find out what services they are eligible for, keep track of their use and integrate it with their health history, Wild said.

## Pilot Initiative: New Hampshire

- Efforts led by a coalition partner, the Healthcare Leadership Council
- Developed localized materials for seniors and providers
- Public relations outreach has included placement of Dr. Charlotte Yeh of CMS and MDSP spokesperson on a New Hampshire Public Radio program to discuss Medicare prevention benefits, especially for diabetes

## What Are We Learning from Research?

- Seniors think they are getting tested – but are they?
- Seniors recognize that diabetes is serious yet about half feel no personal vulnerability
- Seniors will ask questions of their doctors – but they don't want to challenge their doctors
- Next up is research among health care providers, with an emphasis on primary care physicians

# Our Ask of You

We ask that you consider:

- Sharing information about the Medicare Diabetes Screening Project within your organizations
- Promoting the messages of the MDSP to your constituents, as appropriate
- Joining our coalition
- Sharing any relevant research that would help us better understand the issues of diabetes testing/screening and how providers interact with patients around the detection and diagnosis process

## Our Bottom Line



- **The Medicare Modernization Act will improve diabetes care only if...**
  - Seniors go to a doctor and are screened, diagnosed, and treated under Medicare
  - Those with pre-diabetes are diagnosed and get care – including follow up screening – that can prevent diabetes

## For More Information

For updates and materials on Medicare screening for diabetes and pre-diabetes, or to join our coalition effort to build a national drive to get seniors screened, please contact:

**Jay Hedlund**  
**Novo Nordisk**  
**JHED@novonordisk.com**  
**202-626-4526**

**Abby Bownas**  
**American Diabetes Association**  
**[abownas@diabetes.org](mailto:abownas@diabetes.org)**  
**703-549-1500**