

# Adapting the U.S. Diabetes *Conversation Map*<sup>®</sup> Education Tools for an African American Audience in South Carolina

## **Public Health Issue**

- Diabetes self-management education helps people with diabetes prevent complications and hospitalizations from this condition.
- Emergency Department visits by African Americans with diabetes in South Carolina are almost twice as high as in others with diabetes.
- Culturally adapting diabetes self-management education for groups of participants subject to racial/ethnic health disparities such as higher rates of disease complications makes it more likely that people with diabetes will apply the information and better control their disease.
- Educational materials designed to accommodate the various learning styles of program participants are more likely to be effective.

## **Program**

- With support from Merck and Company and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Diabetes Prevention and Control Program partnered with American Diabetes Association-recognized programs in rural Berkeley and Dorchester counties to use the Diabetes *Conversation Map* tools.
- Both participating rural counties have a large African American population, are part of the REACH US SEA-CEED project, and are working to eliminate health disparities related to diabetes prevention and control.
- Close to 300 adult participants with diabetes from federally-qualified health centers and physician's offices were exposed to the *Conversation Map* tools in their diabetes group education classes.
- The *Conversation Map* tools were adapted for the African American participant population by expanding one carbohydrate counting session to two sessions, adding several 'myth' cards, adding images of places of worship, and providing facilitation for the reading of the cards.

## **Impact**

- Following the diabetes group education session with the *Conversation Map* tools almost all of the adults participating in physician's offices made improvements compared to just over 50% of those participating at federally-qualified health centers.
- According to the diabetes educators, the *Conversation Map* tools were effective in reaching an underserved group of people by revealing and dispelling myths participants had about diabetes, removing barriers to participant's self-care, and increasing the likelihood that the participant will take action to control their disease.
- Diabetes educators are more likely to use the *Conversation Map* tools because the training and the tools are available at no-cost.

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