

NEW MEXICO DIABETES AND DEPRESSION COURSE INCREASES PROVIDER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Online access is a plus for rural providers with limited resources outside of metro areas

Public Health Problem

- Diabetes management can be undermined by the existence of depression leading to poor health outcomes and greater medical costs.
- The prevalence of diabetes and depression is high in New Mexico and there is a shortage of providers knowledgeable about this issue, especially in rural areas of the state.
- Online courses are an effective way to reach health care professionals who practice in rural and frontier areas.
- Health care providers can facilitate screening, referral and treatment for diabetes and depression if they have the tools, resources and expertise to take action.

Program

- The New Mexico Diabetes Prevention and Control Program coordinated a project using a contractor, MediaDesigns Inc., to develop an online educational program that teaches providers to diagnose depression and prescribe appropriate and effective treatment as well as track and monitor patients throughout the process. Program staff and volunteer experts offered content and instructional design support. Find course information at: <http://www.diabetesnm.org>
- Funding was provided through the Program's cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention along with substantial in-kind support from partners. The course is available at no cost to participants.
- A testing service evaluates student results and provides certificates on completion. An online database specialist tracks course use and participant data.
- More than five hundred users from forty states have taken the course, primarily physicians, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians, social workers, and health educators.

Impact

- This ongoing project overcomes barriers to treatment and prevention of diabetes by offering tools to health care providers, accessible online at no cost, and providing needed continuing education with credits that help fulfill licensing requirements for physicians, nurses, pharmacists, health educators, dietitians and social workers.
- The availability of federal funds leveraged additional in-kind support from partners.
- The course reaches across state boundaries to fill a need identified by additional providers.
- One trainee expresses her enthusiasm for the course as, 'Very good explanation of research in diabetes and depression - very useful in my current practice. Thank you!'

Contact

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