

# Maximizing Diabetes Prevention through Media Engagement in Pennsylvania


---

**A 1705 NADD Success Story**



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.




**SUMMARY:** Working in partnership with NACDD to implement the strategies of the 1705 Cooperative Agreement, the Health Promotion Council (HPC) leverages statewide capacity-building experience to build infrastructure to confront the prediabetes epidemic in rural Pennsylvania. HPC has translated the success of the statewide “Make A Choice” diabetes awareness campaign, with its media partner, Perry Media Group, to localize National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change program marketing in partnership with Duke Life Point Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center and to increase awareness and enrollment. This campaign reaches clinicians and the public across a tri-county network.

**CHALLENGE:** Nearly 3.4 million people live in rural Pennsylvania. Approximately 35% of Pennsylvanians are estimated to have prediabetes or are at high risk of developing diabetes. It is imperative that National DPP lifestyle change programs are utilized and sustained to tackle the trend of diabetes onset. The benefits of these programs may not be realized without an effective communication plan that improves the integration of public health infrastructure, lack of physician prioritization, and limited public awareness. In partnership with PMG, a marketing plan incorporating the successful “Make A Choice” statewide campaign was adapted to localized audiences within the Conemaugh Health system to meet the goals of: increased program participation and retention by employees and residents and improved referral rates by clinicians. Conemaugh, HPC, PMG and Hope 80/20 assembled the communications team to implement the marketing plan.

**SOLUTION:** The localized “Make A Choice” campaign included activities in three key areas:

- 1) **Public awareness** - National DPP lifestyle change program graduate was advertised as a Healthy Champion; interviews with healthy physician champion; and visibility at major events, including Flood City Music Festival, 5k Que Classic, and Richland Community Days.
- 2) **Physician awareness** - Quick glance guide for Prevent Diabetes STAT messages; National DPP presentation with PA Medical Society at Diabetes Alert Day; and chief medical officers served as champions to advocate for referrals.
- 3) **Conemaugh’s organizational awareness** - A corporate wellness team in partnership with Hope 80/20 integrated a virtual National DPP lifestyle change program within the health system corporate wellness offerings.

**“Fifty-two participants enrolled in the publicly offered National DPP lifestyle change program cohorts. And 70 Conemaugh employees enrolled in HOPE 80/20 virtual programs employee wellness offering.”**



**RESULTS:** There was an increase in the promotional activities for awareness and availability of National DPP lifestyle change programs within the Conemaugh's tri-county service area as a result of the localized "Make A Choice" marketing plan. Businesses and organizations including Gallikers, Arbutus, Gautier Steel, Penn Machine, FFX, FWA, St. Francis, and the Lions Club allied with the project communications team to promote and, in some cases, to deliver community-based programs. Fifty-two participants enrolled in the publicly offered National DPP lifestyle change program cohorts. And 70 Conemaugh employees enrolled in HOPE 80/20 virtual programs employee wellness offering. To sustain the availability of National DPP lifestyle change programs, 11 Lifestyle Coaches, including six professionals and five community members, were trained with an addendum "T2 for All" training scheduled for October 2018. Four DPP lifestyle series were scheduled.

**SUSTAINING SUCCESS:** The planning for the second year of the project activities incorporates and builds on the success of the past year. In year two and beyond:

- HPC plans to continue working with PMG to localize the "Make A Choice" diabetes awareness campaign to target other rural counties in Pennsylvania.
- HPC is currently partnering with the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health for support in recruiting Critical Access Hospitals to implement National DPP lifestyle change programs in additional rural counties.
- HPC hopes to scale the success of the statewide "Make A Choice" campaign to national outlets.

**INVOLVEMENT IS KEY:** To join the "Make A Choice" diabetes awareness campaign and learn how to increase awareness in your area, visit [makeachoice.org](http://makeachoice.org). The website includes inspirational stories from Healthy Champions who have won the battle against the onset of type 2 diabetes and photos from awareness events. There is contact information for Diabetes Prevention and Diabetes Self-Management Education Programs as well as a prediabetes quiz for patients to assess whether they are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes.