

Diabetes Prevention Program

# OPERATIONS GUIDE





The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is proven, effective, simple, and changes lives! Managing a DPP can be daunting. This guide provides practical tips on how to maximize effort and succeed.

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# DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM OPERATIONS GUIDE

The process of deciding to operate a DPP starts before a leader is identified and trained to facilitate the program. You must first identify your organizational capacity, organizational support, and your organizational regulations.

**A DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM (DPP) MAKES ECONOMIC SENSE. THIS OPERATIONS GUIDE SHOWS WHY.**

To begin the process, become familiar with the DPP Business Case document (available at <http://FLdiabetesprevention.com/Business-Case.pdf>). This is the best tool to use when seeking organizational support. This document spells out why the DPP program makes economic sense, including return on investment data, and how the DPP can support organizational mission and goals.

Your organization will likely require a cost/benefit analysis. The Business Case document will help you create that document. In addition, below you will find estimated program delivery costs that will help you plan for organizational investment in the program.

It will be necessary to create a business plan for your new program. The following questions may be helpful in writing your business plan:

- What is your vision for the program?
- What will signify success for the program?
- How will you operate the program?
- Who will pay the costs associated with the program?
- How will you bill program participants?
- Are there opportunities for reimbursement?
- What will you offer in terms of additional services?
- Will you incentivize participants in the program?
- Where and when will the program operate?
- Will you receive referrals from health professionals associated with your organization?

- Do you have needed approvals and forms for referrals?
- How will you market your program?
- What marketing restrictions in your organization do you need to be aware of?
- Are there other clinical organizations and non-profits that could partner with you to market your program?
- Are there any potential threats to your program success?
- How will you ensure program sustainability?

Once you have developed an overall business plan, you will need to make sure your organizational leadership understands the value and purpose of the program. There are many ways to seek and secure leadership buy-in. Here are a few ideas to help you:

- Present the DPP Business Case to your organizational leadership and community leaders as a way to show economic value and effectiveness of the program.
- Find examples of other organizations in your state that have implemented the program with success and learn from them.
- Consider a multi-pronged approach to program management and marketing. Can your efforts with your program benefit other parts of your organization? If yes, that is a great promotional element to use with your organizational leadership.
- Think about the upstream benefits of the program. If you are in a health system, offering this program may be considered a benefit in building good will and customer loyalty for the health system.

# PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Organizing a DPP is a significant undertaking. There are many elements that can be time consuming if not properly planned. This next section strives to help program managers identify the best options for program establishment, support, marketing, data collection, program costs, and program recognition.

## IDENTIFYING GREAT LEADERS

Identifying great leaders for the DPP is essential to program success. The DPP is led by one or more Lifestyle Coaches. Program leaders must embody certain characteristics to excel and build strong relationships with participants. Consider the following list of ways to identify leaders to help with your program:

### What Makes a Great Lifestyle Coach?

- A great leader has an engaging personality that exudes warmth.
- A great leader creates a sense of community among the participants.
- A great leader is participant focused, not self-focused.
- A great leader is a natural connector!
- A great leader is a collaborator and someone who thrives on learning.
- A great leader can shift gears and is flexible when a lesson isn't working.
- A great leader knows the curriculum inside and out.

## CREATING A DPP TEAM

Ideally, your team will include a Lifestyle Coach, a class assistant, a data entry person, and a marketer. One person can fill several roles, but these are the competencies that are necessary for a successful DPP.

A co-leader or class assistant can be very helpful, especially with larger groups. Clearly define roles and responsibilities to make the collaboration go smoothly.

## IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

- Consider the population (seniors, working adults, etc.) you will target and design your program to meet their needs.
- Consider time of day, location, transportation, and convenience when establishing your program.

## PROGRAM COSTS

Operating a DPP can be expensive. Here are approximate costs you should plan for:

### General Costs:

- Digital scale for weekly weight collection (\$50)
- Directional signs for events/meetings (\$40)
- Promotional Flyers  
(500 Black and White x .12 each = \$60)
- Class demonstration aids to be used by the Lifestyle Coach:
  - Measuring cups and spoons (\$5 each)
  - Sample food items (\$10 total)
  - Fat model for demonstration (\$100 from NASCO)
  - Food scale (\$20)
  - Therapy bands or exercise bands (\$10-15)
  - Mini-weights (\$10)

### Basic Costs per Participant:

- 3-ring Binder for each participant (\$3 each)
- Approximately 280 pages of photocopied information for each participant (280 black and white copies x .12=\$33.60 per participant)
- Calorie King book for each participant (\$10 each)
- Food and Activity tracker printing (128 black and white copies x .12=\$15.36 per participant for 16 trackers during the core/weekly sessions). The printing cost will be higher if you provide trackers for participants in the monthly (post core) sessions.
- Additional printing costs for forms and supplemental handouts

Depending on how your program operates and your parent organization's guidelines, you will have to make choices about how to compensate your Lifestyle Coach. Coaches can spend 6–8 hours a week on class preparation, class facilitation, data entry, and general organization. Time commitment increases with additional groups.

If you are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, or an academic or clinical organization associated with a charitable foundation, you may consider applying for funding through a local grant-making organization. You may find a list of these organizations through the Foundation Center Directory, <http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/>, or through Guidestar, <http://www.guidestar.org/>

Local companies, community leaders, health-oriented enterprises, and local philanthropists may be interested in supporting your program. They may not require you to be a 501(c)(3).

## ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Many DPPs operate on a shoestring budget. Marketing can absorb as much of a budget as you will allow. Here are tips on how to market your program and get more for less:

- Consider community locations to post your flyers: libraries, senior centers, retirement community centers, grocery stores and coffee shop bulletin boards, churches, and fitness centers.
- Ask for free advertising. Sometimes local publications will offer you media coverage in the form of an interview or editorial. This is incredibly valuable to your program!
- Add your event(s) to local media (print and online) community calendars. This is typically a free service.
- Find a community champion (minister, health professional, public figure) and partner with that person to pitch your program to the media.
- Use past success stories to promote future programs.
- Don't forget to use annual health observances to your advantage—Diabetes Alert Month is March and Diabetes Awareness Month is November.
- Partner with local organizations to get the

word out. Consider the American Diabetes Association, Rotary International, Kiwanis Clubs, and RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) as options.

- Create a public event with a speaker and turn it into a promotional opportunity for your program.
- Compliment other entrepreneurial efforts in your community. If you help others, they will help you. Collaborate with other organizations on events, speakers, exhibits, etc.

## PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

Here are some tips to help you operate your program smoothly:

- Arrive at the class location 1 hour before the program begins.
- Make any room modifications necessary. Arranging the tables and chairs in a U format has been shown to facilitate maximum discussion.
- Pre-set the tables with class materials. (Consider providing only 1 week of materials at a time.) Class materials include the weekly handouts and a new food and activity tracker.
- Set up the scale and the weigh in area. Make sure to have a chair available for people who may be unsteady when they stand. Depending on the flooring, you may need to also have a 12x12 ceramic tile to steady and regulate the scale.  
**NOTE:** Make sure to have post-it notes and a pen to write the weight values down for participants to chart in their own notebooks. Also, make sure to have a list to capture weight data for your master data entry after the class. (At the first class, determine if any participants need special accommodations and plan accordingly.)
- Set up the display area with any props or examples necessary for the class. (Measuring cups, sneakers, food demonstrations, etc.)
- The class assistant should have extra copies of past class handouts for anyone who missed receiving them.
- Place past week trackers on a table for participants to gather and review.
- Write inspirational phrases on a white board

or large paper and post around the room to encourage class members.

**NOTE:** Always make sure to have access to water and sugar—just in case of an emergency. This could be in a vending machine in the class facility or it could be something you bring to the classroom.

There are many other elements that go into operating a successful DPP program. Here is a list of what helps create an ideal class environment and relationship between the coach and the class participants:

- Each week or so the coach needs to email or call the participants to encourage them.
- Each week the coach needs to post to the class Facebook page to motivate participants to stay on track. This helps set the tone and the relationship of the class. Post interesting articles, pictures, facts, and encouragement to keep momentum high.
- Each week the coach needs to read and make comments on each participant’s food/activity tracker.
- Each week the coach needs to enter data into a master tracking spreadsheet.
- Establish a make-up session for participants who miss the regular class day.
- The application requires organizational and contact information, reporting of the curriculum you intend to follow, and whether you will offer the program in-person, virtually, or both.
- Once your application for the DPRP is accepted by the CDC, you will be given “pending status” and will report data to the CDC annually for two years.
- You will have six months to begin your first class once you have received pending status.
- Achieving full CDC recognition requires submission and approval of data from two years of program delivery.
- Once full recognition status is achieved, you must continue to submit data to maintain recognized status.
- Ideally, the DPP would become a long-term program offered through your organization.
- The expansion of Medicare benefit coverage of DPP will likely require DPRP recognition as a quality control measure. Organizations billing Medicare for DPP will likely need to achieve and maintain Recognized Status to be reimbursed.
- Insurance companies like Florida Blue are implementing coverage of the DPP for their members, but require DPRP recognition or pending recognition status. Other health plans are likely to follow suit.

## CDC DIABETES PREVENTION RECOGNITION PROGRAM (DPRP) GUIDELINES

Applying for DPRP program recognition is optional, but a valuable way to demonstrate the efficacy of your program. Before applying to the CDC, take the Capacity Assessment and review the DPRP Standards and Operating Procedures to ensure that your organization has the capacity to begin and sustain a DPP.

Since this is a two-year process and may become a requirement for funding or reimbursement in the future, applying once you are ready to begin your program is optimal. Inclusion on the CDC registry not only recognizes your program for quality service, but also bolsters sustainability.

- The process begins by applying to the CDC DPRP at [https://nccd.cdc.gov/DDT\\_DPRP/Registry.aspx](https://nccd.cdc.gov/DDT_DPRP/Registry.aspx)

## DATA COLLECTION

- If using paper forms to capture attendance, weight, and physical activity minutes in each class, you will want to transfer the data to an electronic spreadsheet as you go. Don’t wait until the end of the year.
- Systematically collecting and entering data will help you identify missing data and ensure you are consistently collecting necessary information.
- The deadline for data submission is based on your organization’s approval date issued by the CDC.

### An example:

The CDC approval date of the application is 10/15/16. The effective date of the recognition program is the first day of the following month or 11/1/16. Data will be submitted during 11/1/17 to 11/30/17 for the first year. The data should be from classes held 10/15/16 to 10/31/17.

- At each anniversary of your acceptance into the DPRP, you will be required to report data on each participant. This data will include:
  - age
  - height
  - sex
  - ethnicity
  - race
  - how their prediabetes was determined
  - weekly weights
  - weekly physical activity minutes
- A good practice is to collect demographic, sex, height and prediabetes status information at the time participants sign-up for the program. Also ask all participants to complete the Diabetes Screening Risk Test and ask participants to have a blood screening test. Participants are eligible for the program by blood glucose screening, history of gestational diabetes or diabetes screening risk test. However, at least 50% of your participants should be eligible according to blood glucose tests.
  - ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino)
  - race (Asian American, Black, Native American or Pacific Islander, white)
  - sex
  - date of session
  - height
  - physical activity minutes (this data is not required prior to session 5 or after session 16)

## PITFALLS TO WATCH FOR

- Not following the required format including order of variable name, default values used, and missing data rules
- Not collecting attendance data
- Not collecting enough weight and physical activity data in order to meet standards. (Make sure to ask participants to weigh-in at every class.)

## REPORTING YOUR DATA

Data collection is not always simple or easy, but it is worthwhile to receive CDC recognition for your program. Programs may face challenges in achieving recognition because they didn't plan their process from the very beginning. Mistakes in data collection and reporting can make it more difficult to achieve approved status.

- The CDC DPRP maintains specific formats and instructions for submitting data. Carefully read the requirements, attend online informational webinars hosted by CDC DPRP staff, and schedule technical assistance calls if needed.
- The categories of data that you will be asked to provide (according to the 2015 standards) are:
  - organizational code (this is assigned by the CDC DPRP upon receiving pending status)
  - participant number (this is a number code assigned by your program; each participant must have their own unique identifier)
  - state in which the program is offered
  - blood glucose test
  - history of gestational diabetes
  - diabetes risk screening test
  - age



# MAINTAINING YOUR PROGRAM

Managing a program takes a lot of patience, as well as a sense of humor. Participants will often need extra time and attention. Don't let this get you down. It is important to be a steady, reassuring individual in the life of the participant.

## DAY TO DAY REALITIES

- Many times participants lack support at home, and the coach becomes one of their most significant sources of personal support throughout this program. When participants feel comfortable enough sharing personal struggles, it means you are doing a great job as a coach! You have garnered their trust—and that will make it easier for the participant to believe in your positive health messages.
- It is easy to underestimate the time that managing a program will take. At the beginning of your time as a coach, it will take many more hours to prepare for your classes. By the end of the program, things will operate faster and more smoothly.
- At times you may feel overwhelmed. Just remember that you are changing lives—even saving lives!
- Taking the class with your participants can be an effective strategy. Not only will you reap the benefits personally, you will be able to share in the challenges with the participants. Humanizing your role in the class is a great way to build trust and a family atmosphere.

## WHAT ABOUT NEWLY DIAGNOSED TYPE 2'S?

- People with newly diagnosed Type 2 diabetes can greatly benefit from lifestyle change. Depending on your organization, you may allow people with newly diagnosed Type 2 to attend your classes; however, you are not to submit their data to the CDC DPRP or for insurance reimbursement.

## FAMILY MEMBER DYNAMICS

- Support from family members can greatly improve the success for DPP participants.

In some cases, it may be useful to invite or allow participants to bring their partners or a family member to the classes.

- You could allow partners or loved ones to participate in the class, but not submit their data for the CDC DPRP (if they don't have prediabetes), or you could schedule "Bring-a-Loved One" classes during specific sessions such as "Being A Fat and Calorie Detective" or "Healthy Eating Out."

## SENIOR SPECIFICS

- Seniors can have great success with the program, but may have unique needs compared to other groups.
- Seniors may be less likely to use email or social media. Ask participants how they would like to be contacted.
- Many may be on a limited budget. Plan your location to minimize transportation and other personal costs.

## USING TECHNOLOGY

Some DPPs are designed to be offered fully online; however, even face-to-face programs can benefit from using technology to connect with participants.

- There are some cost effective technologies like GoToMeeting or Google Hangouts to implement electronic or video communications with participants. These can be great tools for make-up sessions.
- Participants may need instruction on how to use these kinds of online tools, and there may be some growing pains as you initiate the use of technology. Be prepared for lots of challenges and always have a backup plan.

## KEEP MOMENTUM UP AND NURTURE SUSTAINABILITY

Community or population health programs work best if a community of volunteers and leaders are committed to keeping the momentum high. As a coach, you should seek a group of supporters for yourself. At some point in the



year-long journey you will need a shoulder to lean on and a willing ear to listen.

- Don't hesitate to ask for assistance from colleagues. A year is a long time and coaches can get burned out. Your colleagues can offer great informational sessions for the program participants, especially during the monthly sessions (post-core) after the group has bonded.
- Remind yourself and your participants how far you all have come by reviewing baseline weights and individual stories of success. (A multi-point evaluation tool can help you gather this data.)
- Have participants share success stories or positive points along the journey. Group motivation is a powerful tool.
- Have the group engage in problem solving when participants are struggling. Hearing that others feel "just like them" is an important community builder in the class setting.

## IDENTIFY COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

- Leaders in our communities are always eager to hear about success stories with health education programs. This is the perfect program to share with state legislators, city council members, your mayor, community health organizations, local churches, and local pharmacies.
- Don't forget your city services like the community library, post office, community college, and school board when you advertise and promote your program.
- Use guest speakers during months 7-12. Plan ahead to identify, invite, and schedule experts in the community. Remember you are also promoting your program to those experts.
- Remember you can fundraise for your program. Ask individuals and businesses in your community to help you make a difference in people's lives.

# LONG-TERM PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

Long-term participant engagement in health and lifestyle change is the ultimate goal of the DPP. There are many techniques to consider to keep your participants involved and thinking about their health. Don't forget, engaged participants make great program spokespersons!

## CONSIDER GRADUATES AS NEW COACHES

- Successful participants are your greatest champions and advocates—use them! They often want to give back; ask them to help you market new programs, distribute flyers, and share the program success message with others. These program graduates are ideal for speaking to local civic clubs and community groups about the DPP.
- Successful participants make for wonderful testimonials for grant applications and private donations.

## GATHER FEEDBACK REGULARLY FROM PARTICIPANTS

- Surveying and talking with participants during their diabetes prevention journey is really important. This can be done electronically or with pen/paper. Asking for their feedback values their part in the journey and their specific experience. Creating this kind of bond can be incredibly beneficial for your program.
- Participants can have valuable ideas about teaching methods, class examples, social events, and more. Ask them what should change or be added for future classes!

## MARKET SUCCESS STORIES TO THE MEDIA DURING DIABETES MONTHS (MARCH AND NOVEMBER)

- Use the opportunities of March and November to aggressively promote your program. These months are identified by major diabetes organizations as diabetes months.

- March and November are great times to host an informational event, start a new program, even share program success stories. Let your community know about the resource of DPP!
- Op Eds (Opinion Editorials) in the local newspaper are a useful mechanism for promotion.
- Consider offering your expertise to local TV stations for guest appearances on morning or talk format shows.
- Witty social media posts, pictures, and memes go a long way to building relationships with participants.
- Social gatherings with participants strengthen bonds. Do something fun together to help participants translate information from the classroom to real life.
- Hold one or more of your classes in a new venue such as a city park, the local library, or even a supermarket or produce market.
- Friendly competitions are great opportunities to capture the imagination of participants. If they are having fun with you, they are more likely to attend the classes.

### KEEPING PARTICIPANTS INTERESTED

- Use social media and email to keep the conversation going with participants.

## BILLING AND CODING

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There are many differing practices throughout the country when it comes to billing and coding for DPP. Free programs are wonderful to offer, but they are not sustainable in the long run. To truly succeed, program leaders must have a strategy on billing and coding.

As of January 2016, a Current Procedural Terminology (CPT—American Medical Association) Category III code, 0403T, is available for billing by National DPP providers who have pending or

full status under the CDC DPRP. This code is a temporary CPT code that allows for tracking and building the case for changing it to a permanent Category I billing code. All National DPP providers are encouraged to use this billing code for DPP services. This code can be submitted by organizations with lifestyle coaches who are licensed health providers or lay health workers. Individual health insurance plans will determine if the code will be accepted for reimbursement under their plans and the rate of reimbursement.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO ASSIST IN BUILDING YOUR DPP

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American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE), “Practice Resources,” <https://www.diabeteseducator.org/practice/diabetes-prevention-program>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Implement a Lifestyle Change Program (for Professionals),” <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/prevention/lifestyle-program/index.html>

Common Ground: A Learning Community for Lifestyle Coaches, <http://lccommonground.org/>



