

FAITH-BASED APPROACHES TO RECRUITING AND ENROLLING PARTICIPANTS FOR YOUR TYPE 2 DIABETES PREVENTION LIFESTYLE CHANGE PROGRAM



Keys to Success

This tip sheet provides lessons learned and insights from two CDC-funded organizations and five local sites that are implementing faith-based approaches to recruiting and enrolling participants for the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change program. Faith-based approaches to public health have been successful in improving outcomes across a range of health promotion and disease prevention areas. CDC-recognized organizations with a proven record of successfully using faith-based approaches to recruit and enroll participants in the National DPP lifestyle change program have partnered with faith-based organizations in two ways:

1. To promote the lifestyle change program within their congregations and local communities.
2. To offer the lifestyle change program in their facilities.

The main keys to success identified were:

- ▶ **Make use of established relationships with larger faith-based networks.**
- ▶ **Be sure program staff have a high level of cultural competence in working with faith-based leaders and communities.**
- ▶ **Assess the capacity of local faith-based organizations before starting a partnership.**
- ▶ **Be sure faith-based organizations benefit from participating.**
- ▶ **Maintain regular communication with faith-based leaders.**
- ▶ **Emphasize inclusiveness in program messages and in delivering the program.**

Review each of the following tips to identify those that are most applicable to your program and participants.

MAKE USE OF ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS WITH LARGER FAITH-BASED NETWORKS.

Make connections with larger faith-based denominations or national organizations before seeking out partnerships with local faith-based organizations. Connecting first with these networks can pave the way in. They can:

- » Identify local faith-based organizations with the capacity to carry out the proposed work.
- » Get buy-in from leadership of local faith-based organizations to participate in the work.

“We work closely with the bishops. For example, I have to go before the Board of Bishops and tell them what the national organization is doing at their local level. So we utilize all those existing relationships to say, ‘Okay, Bishop, we want to have the diabetes prevention program in your churches and we’re looking at this county, this county, and this county. What churches do you have in those counties that you think will meet these requirements?’”

— Program Staff

BE SURE PROGRAM STAFF HAVE A HIGH LEVEL OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN WORKING WITH FAITH-BASED LEADERS AND COMMUNITIES.

Hire program staff with previous experience and a good understanding of how to work with faith-based leaders and communities. Knowing how to approach and interact with these leaders and communities will make planning and implementing faith-based approaches a much smoother and easier process.

“The messenger is going to matter in terms of who is going to talk to your churches and how to talk to them. That really begins with a vetted relationship. Otherwise, you will either (a) never get in the door, or (b) you will get in the door but you won’t stay long.”

— Program Staff

ASSESS THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS BEFORE STARTING A PARTNERSHIP.

Assess the potential faith-based partner’s capacity to carry out the proposed work. Gather information about the types of health-related programs, activities, or events the faith-based organization has conducted. Also learn about the roles of the staff who were involved in these events. These activities will help to identify faith-based organizations with the capacity to implement the National DPP lifestyle change program.



BE SURE THE FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS BENEFIT FROM PARTICIPATING.

Show appreciation and mutual respect for the contributions of participating faith-based organizations by providing something in return to these organizations for their own benefit. Examples of this might include:

- » Providing regular reports of program results and successes.
- » Volunteering to help at events hosted by the participating faith-based organization.

“We’re asking a lot from the churches, so we need to give something back... We volunteer a lot of our staff. When there’s a church event or activity, they volunteer their time to go over. This helps to build trust.”

— Program Staff

MAINTAIN REGULAR COMMUNICATION WITH FAITH-BASED LEADERS.

¹¹¹¹ Conduct regular check-ins with leaders of the congregation to make sure that the lifestyle change program is running smoothly. Address any concerns from the leaders, and make sure rapport and trust are built between program staff and faith-based leaders and communities.

EMPHASIZE INCLUSIVENESS IN PROGRAM MESSAGES AND IN DELIVERING THE PROGRAM.

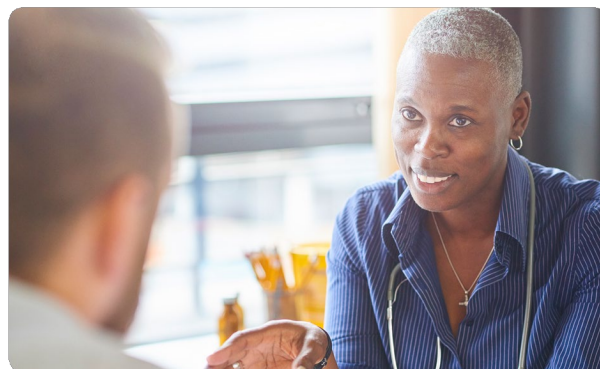
¹¹¹¹ When discussing the program with potential participants interested in joining, or with faith-based organizations that are partners in carrying out the program, stress that all are welcome to join the program, even if they are not a member of the congregation.

¹¹¹¹ Consider participant preferences when selecting class locations. It may be helpful to offer classes in multiple locations, including community locations that are and are not faith-affiliated.

» Some faith-based organizations may want to offer classes at their facilities; however, not all potential participants may feel comfortable attending classes in a place of worship or other faith-based environment with which they are not affiliated.

» Other potential participants, such as members of another particular faith-based organization, may not want to attend classes in a location that is not affiliated with their faith-based organization.

“You know, we’re always conscious of having this program in this church. So that’s the reason why our programs are offered in different sites. Faith-based locations are part of our approach but not all of it.”
— Program Staff



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Disclaimer: This tip sheet is intended to provide lessons learned and insights on faith-based approaches to recruiting and enrolling participants in the National DPP lifestyle change program that may be of interest to CDC-recognized organizations. The findings and conclusions in this tip sheet do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

HELPFUL RESOURCES

¹¹¹¹ [Keys to Success: Recruiting Participants](#)

¹¹¹¹ [Emerging Practices: Approaches Taken by State and Local Health Departments to Market the National Diabetes Prevention Program to Populations At Risk and Health Care Providers](#)

¹¹¹¹ [Newspaper Ad: Why do I PreventT2?](#)

