

# Job Aid & Promotional Materials

## Working with the Muslim Faith Community

### to Promote the National DPP

Faith is central to the lives of many priority groups that the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP) lifestyle change program (LCP) is trying to reach. This Job Aid and Promotional Materials Bundle is intended to help you understand more about the Muslim faith community and how to conduct outreach to build lasting relationships and promote your LCP.

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## Islam in the United States – An Overview

### History and Doctrine

Islam is one of the largest religions in the world and is practiced by 1.8 billion people. It began with the work of God’s last prophet, Muhammad, (A.D. 570-632) in what is currently Saudi Arabia. Muslims believe there is one almighty God, referred to in Arabic as Allah, who is infinitely superior to and transcendent from humankind. Allah is viewed as the creator of the universe and everything that happens is in Allah’s will, power, wisdom and might. People who practice Islam are known as Muslims, and they believe in the following five religious duties (also known as the Five Pillars of Islam):

1. Repeat a creed about Allah and Muhammad (shahadah).
2. Recite certain prayers in Arabic five times a day (daily prayer or salah).
3. Give to the needy (zakat).
4. One month each year (called Ramadan), fast (sawm) from food, drink, and other worldly pleasures from sunrise to sunset.
5. A once in a lifetime pilgrimage to the Holy City of Mecca is to be made by those that are financially and physically able to (Hajj).



Based on one's devotion to the practices of Islam, a Muslim strives each day and works towards the hereafter by fulfilling the five pillars of the religion.

The main scripture of Islam is called the Qur'an and it is Allah's word dictated to Muhammad. Its central theme is that life is to be lived in subordination to Allah's will and that devotional life centers on the confession (shahadah), "*There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.*" The Qur'an acts as a behavioral guide to practicing Muslims and includes many rules related to maintaining good health. An additional text, the Sunnah – which is a record of Muhammad's sayings and deeds during his lifetime – also provides health messages that are often used in health promotion within the Muslim community.

Islam has two major branches: the Sunni branch, claiming approximately 90% of all Muslims, and the Shi'a branch, which claims about 10% of the Muslim population and exists primarily in Iraq and Iran.

While Islam is often associated with the Middle East, the largest population of Muslims in the world reside in South Asia. Islam is also the majority religion in many countries in Central and Southeast Asia as well as North and Sub-Saharan Africa.

### Islam in the United States

American Islam began with the arrival of African slaves. It is estimated that about 10% of African slaves that were transported to the United States were Muslim. From the 1880s to 1914, several thousand Muslims immigrated to the United States from the Ottoman Empire (current day Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Lebanon) and from parts of South Asia. They did not form distinctive settlements and are assumed to have mostly assimilated into the wider society or returned to their homelands.

By 1920, Arab immigrants worshiped in a rented hall in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and they built a mosque of their own fifteen years later. Lebanese-Syrian communities did the same in Ross, North Dakota, and later in Detroit, Michigan, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Michigan City, Indiana.

However, the Muslim population in America was growing during this time. With the exodus of Americans of African descent from the South to Northern cities in the early 20th century, a number of African Americans began converting to Islam and establishing communities and organizations. There are two main African American Muslim groups. The American Muslim Mission is the largest and most closely

### Key Facts

**Houses of Worship:** Mosque

**Community of Believers:** Congregation

**Clergy:** Imam, but may also be qadi, mufti, mullah, sheikh or ayatollah. These leaders provide support and advice to community members in spiritual and non-spiritual matters, including family and health-related decisions.

**Tips:**

- Always make first contact with the leader of the mosque (called the imam). Mosques are often the sites of presentations, gatherings, and organizations that serve the worshipping community. You may be connected with the person or persons who manage these activities through the imam.
- When referencing Allah in any materials, you should include "SWT" in parenthesis after Allah's name (e.g. "Allah (SWT)"). This is a Muslim honorific that stands for "*Subhanahu wa ta'ala*" which is Arabic for "The most glorified, the most high."

**Messaging Focus:** Islamic scripture provides strong foundations for health promotion. Health – particularly in terms of dietary laws (halal and haram foods) – is mentioned in the Qur'an and the ways of the Prophet. Focus on maintaining spiritual, mental, and physical health – and the holistic interconnection of all three – is part of practicing the Muslim faith.

adheres to traditional Islam as practiced in the rest of the world and by non-African Americans in the United States. The Nation of Islam is a much smaller and more controversial group.

Most recently, Muslim immigration has included the arrival of Palestinian refugees after the creation of Israel in 1948. By the 1990s, Muslims had established more than six hundred mosques and centers across the United States. Muslims come to the United States from the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, and South East Asia.

No racial or ethnic group makes up a majority of Muslim American adults:

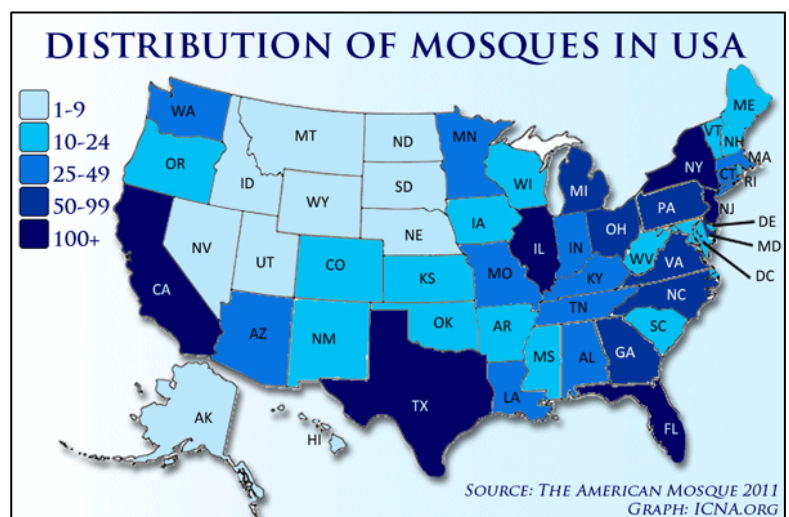
- 41% are classified as white and describe their ancestry as Arab, Middle Eastern, or Persian/Iranian
- 28% identify as South Asian and arrived from Bangladesh, India, or Pakistan
- 20% identify as African American, either U.S. born or immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa
- 8% identify as Hispanic

The majority of Muslims in the United States live in the following states: California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. This is reflected by the distribution of mosques around the country.

Muslims are a youthful demographic compared to other religious groups, with a median age of 33 years.

It is important to acknowledge that Muslims in the United States often experience stereotyping, discrimination, and racism, both in daily life and in healthcare settings.

This may make them reluctant to seek healthcare, to join healthcare-related programs (like an LCP), or cause them to drop out of programs early. It is imperative to acknowledge and validate these concerns and work to alleviate them by demonstrating respect in all interactions with the Muslim community.



## Health Views

As previously mentioned, both the Qur'an and the Sunnah provide strong health promotional messages, which are built into the daily practices of Islam. These include, but are not limited to, specific scriptural guidelines on:

- Diet
- Cleanliness, including practicing ablution (washing oneself before prayer)
- Social connectedness (having healthy links with the Muslim community)

Dietary restrictions within the Qur'an are adhered to by many practicing Muslims. These restrictions outline guidelines on permissible (halal) and prohibited (haram) foods. For example, halal meat is any meat that has been prepared as prescribed by Islamic law. In general, while most meat can be prepared halal, such as chicken and beef, pork cannot and is therefore a haram product. Alcohol is also a common haram product.

## Resisting Assumptions

There are over 1.8 billion Muslims in the world, but they are not a homogenous group. As with many religious communities, they are made up of individuals diverse in culture, race, and geographic origin who each practice their faith in the way that is most relevant to them. This means that they may follow all of, some of, or in excess of, the brief description of Muslim practices you have read about here. When conducting outreach, be sure to refrain from making assumptions and be ready and willing to learn from community leaders and individuals who are members of the Muslim community.

## Materials for Use in Promoting Your LCP to the Muslim Faith Community

### Letter of Support

*To use: Customize this letter of support by filling in the highlighted portions with specific details about your program. Once you've filled in the letter, you can mail it to local mosques and Muslim faith-based organizations to ask for their participation in your program. Be sure to tailor these resources to address local specifics and needs and use community liaisons when available.*

### Promoting [Name of Your Local CDC Recognized Lifestyle Change Program] For Better Health in the Muslim Community

Whether at mosque during Friday Prayer [replace Friday Prayer with "jumah" if more appropriate] or through your work in the Muslim community, your congregation looks to you and other imams for guidance in achieving and maintaining spiritual, mental, and physical health. Islam already promotes strong health messages through scripture in the Qur'an and Sunnah and supports healthy living in many of its practices. As a faith leader, you can build on these foundations by encouraging your community to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

One way to do this is to join the [Name of program], [part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention program OR a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program].

#### What is [name of program]?

[Name of program] is [part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention program OR a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program]. Lifestyle change programs that are part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program are proven interventions developed specifically to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. The program is designed for people who have prediabetes or are at risk for developing type 2 diabetes, but who do not already have a type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Our trained lifestyle coaches are members of the community. They lead the program to help participants adopt a new lifestyle to take care of their body – already an important part of the Muslim faith – through healthier eating, reducing stress, and getting more physical activity.

Participants build a community together where they can learn, laugh, share stories, try new things, and create new habits that support their faith and a healthier lifestyle – all while lowering their risk of developing type 2 diabetes and improving their physical health.

***"Eat and drink and don't go beyond the limit."***

**Qur'an 7:31**

Much like their spiritual practice, their new lifestyle is an ongoing journey – one not just for today, but for the long term. Because of this, the lifestyle change program is a year-long program.

### Why promote [your local CDC Recognized Lifestyle Change Program]?

Participating in a program to lose weight through healthy eating and increased physical activity can reduce [name of faith-based organization's members] risk of type 2 diabetes, heart attack, and stroke. The CDC's lifestyle change program has proven results. The year-long, structured lifestyle change intervention has reduced the incidence of type 2 diabetes by 58% among adults with prediabetes. The program is more effective than medications at preventing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Even better news...the results last. Even 15 years after completing the diabetes prevention lifestyle change program, participants were one fourth less likely to develop type 2 diabetes.

Members of [name of faith-based organization] should learn more about [name of program] because... [Include information about the specific local benefits of your program such as grocery tours, cooking classes, community gardens, exercise classes – anything that makes your program have added value and connection with the larger community and promotion of health and wellness.]

## Materials for Use by Muslim Community Leaders to Promote Your LCP

### Drop-In Article

*To use: Customize this article by filling in the highlighted portions with specific details about your program. Once you've filled in the article, you can share it with local mosques or Muslim faith-based organizations in your community to put on their website, to publish in their newsletter, or hand out to their congregations. Be sure to tailor these resources to address local specifics and needs and use community liaisons if available.*

### Practice Your Muslim Faith and Prevent or Delay Type 2 Diabetes

As a Muslim, you know that practicing your faith includes taking care of your spiritual, mental, and physical health. The Qur'an and the Sunnah provide guidelines for leading a healthy, holistic lifestyle. While many Muslims follow these practices, you may still be at risk for certain health problems, including developing type 2 diabetes. Type 2 diabetes can lead to other health issues that may impact how you are able to practice your faith. Muslims with type 2 diabetes often have to abstain from or modify their fasting during Ramadan or other holy days because they need to carefully regulate their blood sugar levels. And if type 2 diabetes progresses to cause the loss of hands, feet or toes, it can make daily prayer more difficult.

Before developing type 2 diabetes, many people develop prediabetes. Prediabetes is a condition where a person's blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as type 2 diabetes. Many people with prediabetes don't know they have it. You may be at risk of developing prediabetes if you are overweight, 45 years or older, or have a family member with type 2 diabetes. If you think you're at risk for prediabetes, you can take a one-minute, online quiz at [cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/](https://cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/).

Prediabetes is reversible and there are lifestyle change programs right here in your community that can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. One program is [Name of program], [part of the CDC's National Diabetes Prevention Program OR a CDC-recognized lifestyle change program]. In the program, you'll work with a coach and other members of [name of mosque or faith-based organization]. Together, you'll learn

new skills that will help you to improve your health and take care of your body by eating healthier within a halal diet, reducing stress, and getting more physical activity.

Just like taking care of your spiritual health, taking care of your physical health is an important part of your Muslim faith. Make healthy lifestyle changes a lifelong part of your practice by preventing or delaying type 2 diabetes.

To learn more about [Name of program], contact us at [phone number, email, etc.].

## Social Media Copy and Images

*To use: Share the posts and the copy below with your mosque or Muslim faith-based community organization to post on their Facebook page. You can also share this with community organizations, faith-based organizations, employers, and other people who influence the Muslim community and ask them to post it as well. These images are fillable so that you can add your own logo and website.*

| Post Copy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Recommended Image                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| As a Muslim, you know that practicing your faith includes taking care of your spiritual, mental, and physical health. But you may still be at risk for certain health problems like prediabetes. Find out if you are at risk for prediabetes with a simple, online quiz: <a href="https://cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/">cdc.gov/prediabetes/takethetest/</a> . |  <p>"O humanity! Eat from what is lawful and good on earth and do not follow Satan's footsteps." (2:168)</p>  <p>YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME<br/>YOUR WEBSITE URL</p> |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |  <p>"... Eat and drink but do not waste" (7:31)</p>  <p>YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME<br/>YOUR WEBSITE URL</p>                                                         |

## Muslim Faith Community Resources for LCPs

### [Islamic Society of North America \(ISNA\)](#)

ISNA is an Islamic organization in North America that contributes to the betterment of the Muslim community through fostering the development of the Muslim community, interfaith relations, civic engagement, and better understanding of Islam.

### [Islamic Medical Association of North America \(IMANA\)](#)

IMANA is a leading resource and network for American-Muslim physicians, dentists and other healthcare professionals in North America.

### [Providing Diverse Care to Muslim Clients Handbook](#)

This handbook provides information on Islam, and the important values, beliefs, and practices to consider when providing healthcare services to Muslims.

### [ISPU Meeting the Healthcare Needs of American Muslims](#)

This report provides an overview of American Muslim health beliefs, describes how these beliefs impact healthcare-seeking practices, and recommends accommodations that can improve the healthcare experience of American Muslim patients.

## Fasting and Diabetes Resources

- [International Diabetes Federation \(IDF\)](#): Guidelines on fasting during Ramadan for Muslims with diabetes and their healthcare providers.
- [Diabetes and Ramadan Alliance \(DAR\)](#): Guidelines and resources on fasting during Ramadan for Muslims with diabetes, including an [interactive map](#) to give specific dietary guidance by country.