Project IMPACT: Diabetes Improves Health Outcomes for Underserved Patients in 25 Communities Disproportionately Affected by Diabetes

Data Show Statistically Significant Improvements in A1C, Cholesterol, Blood Pressure and BMI

Washington, D.C. (PRWEB) October 25, 2013 -- Interim clinical results from Project IMPACT: Diabetes, the first national initiative to deliver quality care to patients with diabetes in 25 communities with a high incidence of or disproportionately affected by diabetes, were announced on October 24 by the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Foundation. The data show statistically significant decreases in A1C (blood sugar), LDL cholesterol, systolic blood pressure and Body Mass Index (BMI), which are all recognized standards of diabetes care.

Participating patients in 25 communities in 17 states who experienced improved outcomes encompass almost every socioeconomic class, insurance status and ethnicity.

Launched in 2010 in partnership with the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation’s Together on Diabetes™ initiative, Project IMPACT: Diabetes is modeled after several other highly successful APhA Foundation programs, including the Diabetes Ten City Challenge.

More than 2,000 patients who are uninsured, under-insured, homeless and/or living below the poverty line are receiving care from community-based interdisciplinary teams that include pharmacists, physicians, diabetes educators and other members of the health care team.

Participating organizations include community and university-affiliated pharmacies, self-insured employers, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), free clinics and others that have the opportunity to leverage unique stakeholders, existing programs, creative ideas, and additional resources to effectively adapt and implement similar models of care. The APhA Foundation provides communities with tools, resources, guidance and support to facilitate local success.

The cornerstone of local implementations are one-on-one consultations with pharmacists who monitor their patients’ A1C, blood pressure, cholesterol and BMI and help them better manage their disease through appropriate medication use, exercise, nutrition and other lifestyle changes. Pharmacists collaborate with and refer patients to physicians and other health care providers to assure patients receive comprehensive care.

“The interim clinical results of Project IMPACT: Diabetes demonstrate that when pharmacists, physicians, diabetes educators and other members of the health care team work together, patients better manage their diabetes,” said APhA Foundation Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation Benjamin M. Bluml, RPh, who designed and leads Project IMPACT: Diabetes.

“Everyone with diabetes faces challenges such as adhering to prescribed medications, monitoring blood glucose levels, staying current with vaccines and foot and eye exams, and maintaining a healthy diet and lifestyle,” said APhA Foundation Director of Applied Innovation Lindsay Watson, RPh. “Working together with pharmacists empowers all types of patients – rich and poor, insured and uninsured, anywhere in America – to take the steps they need to understand and manage their diabetes while living healthier lives.”
HOW PROJECT IMPACT: DIABETES WORKS
Each community has a “champion” who works together with an APhA Foundation Community Coordinator to customize the implementation of Project IMPACT: Diabetes Diabetes and engage patients, health care professionals, payers and other local resources as they work to improve care.

The APhA Foundation provides training and access to clinical data management tools and its Patient Self-Management Credential™, which helps pharmacists identify each patient’s knowledge strengths and areas for improvement and allows providers to customize the education they provide to prioritize and address each individual’s knowledge gaps.

In addition to one-one-one patient consultations, other aspects of local care models include group educational classes, grocery store food tours, exercise programs, joint visits where pharmacists and physicians meet with patients together and incentives such as bus passes, grocery store gift cards, discounted or free healthy lunches at employer worksites, and discounted co-payments for diabetes medications and supplies.

According to the American Diabetes Association, nearly 26 million Americans have diabetes and more than 200,000 die every year. People with diabetes are at higher risk of developing diabetes-related complications, including heart disease and stroke, kidney failure, blindness and lower limb amputations.

Integrating the APhA Foundation’s proven patient-centered model of collaborative care into Project IMPACT: Diabetes participating communities enables local health care teams to better address the diabetes epidemic they are facing, explained APhA Foundation Executive Director, Mindy D. Smith, RPh.

“The occurrence of diabetes is at epidemic proportions and it has a devastating impact on our healthcare system, especially in communities where access to care may be limited,” Smith said. “Through programs like Project IMPACT: Diabetes, the APhA Foundation is transforming health care delivery in local communities and driving fundamental change in the U.S. health care system.”

About the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Foundation
The American Pharmacists Association (APhA) Foundation, headquartered in Washington, D.C., is a non-profit organization affiliated with the American Pharmacists Association, the national professional society of pharmacists. The APhA Foundation has expertise in designing programs that seek to create a new medication use system in the U.S. where pharmacists, physicians and other health care providers collaborate to reduce health care costs and improve patient outcomes through safe and effective use of medications.

About Together on Diabetes™
Together on Diabetes™, launched in November 2010 by the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation, is a five-year, $115 million initiative to improve health outcomes of people living with type 2 diabetes in the U.S., China and India by strengthening patient self-management, education, community-based supportive services and broad-based community mobilization. Consistent with the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation’s mission to promote health equity, this initiative targets adult populations disproportionately affected by type 2 diabetes.
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