

The need for virtual healthcare programs is greater than ever. Due to the COVID-19 environment creating gaps in healthcare delivery, patients have lost or delayed access to suitable resources and opportunities. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC) awarded 1815 grant funding to the Illinois Pharmacists Association (IPhA) to improve the health of Illinois residents with a pharmacy-based model for the prevention and management of diabetes, heart disease and stroke. IPhA is collaborating with the Harrisburg Medical Center (HMC) and HabitNu™ to provide a virtual lifestyle management and National diabetes prevention program (DPP) in the Southeastern Illinois region. HMC conducts a community needs assessment on an annual basis. This data has shown the prevalence of diabetes, unhealthy diet, and lack of physical exercise in the five counties they serve. The program is focused on healthy lifestyle changes in patients with pre-diabetes. The program consists of twenty-four, one-hour group sessions scheduled over the course of a year. The primary goal is a total body weight reduction of 5% by the end of year one. Each session is coordinated with a lifestyle coach, who is DPP trained through HabitNu™. Two pharmacists, a student pharmacist and a dietician were trained as lifestyle coaches. The marketing and referring of patients is overseen in HMC's three rural health clinics. The clinics have approved advertising materials, a pre-enrollment online needs assessment, and set referral processes for patients. The first cohort is in the recruiting and enrollment phase. A total of 20-25 participants are expected per cohort with an approximate 15% dropout rate. Results will be analyzed at the one-year endpoint. The proof-of-concept paper and the pharmacy model results will be shared with IDPH, CDC and pharmacies.