

Little Earth Strong: A Community-Level, Culturally Appropriate Diabetes Prevention Pilot Targeting Urban American Indians

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This project has been approved by the University of Minnesota Institutional Review Board.

What Is the Purpose of This Study/Review?

- The purpose of this pilot study was to determine if a culturally appropriate diabetes intervention developed in partnership with an Indigenous urban community was feasible.
- To determine if community driven, culturally specific approach could potentially be effective in lowering diabetes risks.
- To determine if a community targeted diabetes intervention would be effective.

What Is the Problem?

- American Indians suffer from the highest diabetes type II disparities than any other group in the United States.
- Present diabetes interventions have been less effective than hoped.

What Are the Findings?

- A culturally specific and community level intervention was developed and found feasible.
- Biometric data indicated that a significant reduction in A1C values.
- Health intervention shows promise if grounded in culture, flexible, and situated within the community.
- Decolonization and community control are key to long-term sustainability and success.

Who Should Care Most?

- Healthcare providers.
- Diabetes educators.
- Community program leaders.
- Indigenous communities.
- Teachers.
- Urban housing project leaders.

Recommendations for Action

- Consult and collaborate with Indigenous, and other urban community leaders, to determine the most culturally appropriate and feasible health interventions.
- Communities must be in control of identifying their health concern and leading policy and establishing communal norms for healthy eating and exercise.
- Children may be most able to maintain healthy behaviors and engagement if the family suffers from high stress.
- Exercise and food perceptions are potentially more effective if culturally grounded and specific.
- Those who attend more frequently, tend to lower their diabetes risks more rapidly. Thus, offering a variety of culturally specific exercise and food options may be the best strategy.