



Contact

Rebecca Lindberg
Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation
612-863-4087; rlindberg@mhif.org

New Study In New Ulm to Explore Whether Adding Phone Coaching Can Improve Diabetes Care

Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation and New Ulm Medical Center to conduct study using registered dietitians to help people with type 2 diabetes improve D5 measures

Minneapolis, MN – August 19, 2016 –For adults living with type 2 diabetes, healthful lifestyle behaviors play a critical role in helping them successfully manage their disease. Eating healthier, being physically active, quitting smoking, managing stress and taking the appropriate medications have all been shown to help people with diabetes live better and avoid future diabetes complications.

One of those complications can be a heart attack, as people who have diabetes are two to three times more likely to have a heart attack compared with people who do not have diabetes. That’s why Hearts Beat Back: The Heart of New Ulm Project (HONU) is pleased to announce a new Minnesota study being conducted by its parent organization, The Minneapolis Heart Institute Foundation (MHIF) in partnership with New Ulm Medical Center. HONU’s mission is to reduce the prevalence of heart attacks in New Ulm. In the study, researchers hope to determine whether patients who receive education and phone counseling from a registered dietitian with diabetes expertise, in addition to care from their primary care physician, make greater improvements in their “D5” outcomes than those who don’t receive the additional support. The D5 measures are a large part of the ongoing care required to manage diabetes, and include A1c (representing long-term blood glucose), statin use, blood pressure, tobacco use and aspirin use. Many of these same behaviors also help prevent a heart attack.

The study builds upon the success of a similar phone coaching program that HONU offered from 2010 to 2014 for people at high risk for heart disease. Nearly 1,100 patients participated in phone coaching and demonstrated outcomes included significant reductions in smoking rates and LDL cholesterol. Participants

also made significant improvements in lifestyle behaviors, such as eating more fruits and vegetables, being more physically active and lowered perceived stress rates.

“In today’s era of improving health through accountable care communities, we are fortunate to be studying the impact of using allied health professionals, such as registered dietitians, to their maximum capacity,” said Gretchen Benson, a registered dietitian and certified diabetes educator who is a health care project manager for MHIF. Benson serves as a co-investigator for the study.

The study will take the form of a randomized, controlled clinical trial among patients at both New Ulm Medical Center and Hutchinson Health, and has primary funding from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. A group of 144 patients age 40-75 who have type 2 diabetes will be randomly divided into a control group and an intervention group. Both groups will receive regular clinical care from their primary care physicians (PCPs), but the intervention group will also receive supplemental care from registered dietitians (RDs) to actively address the D5 measures. RDs will provide health management and education involving nutrition, physical activity, medication adherence and perceived stress, and may also prescribe medications for blood pressure, cholesterol or blood glucose to meet diabetes care goals. Researchers will conduct baseline tests at the beginning of the study and then repeat the tests in one year to determine how the intervention group compares to the control group in the management of their D5 measures.

According to Benson, the study will also help further one of MHIF’s goals to help other communities learn from the successes of The Heart of New Ulm Project and implement similar programs.

###