

NMA DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM

In February 2005, the National Medical Association (NMA) was awarded a five-year cooperative agreement, from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under the “National Diabetes Education Program” (NDEP), to conduct a diabetes outreach program. The program is implemented through NMA affiliate societies in six cities that include Atlanta, GA; Houston, TX; Indianapolis, IN; Los Angeles, CA; Pine Bluff, AR; and Washington, D.C. National partners include the six NMA regions, the Auxiliary to the NMA, and the Student National Medical Association.

The purpose of the NMA Diabetes Education Program is to build and strengthen the NMA’s capacity to reduce the disproportionate burden of diabetes among African Americans through awareness, education, and prevention. Managed by the Program Grants, Education, and Community Outreach Department of the NMA, the grant is nearing the completion of its second year. Activities executed in the six cities are consistent with the program objectives and include:

- 1) Establishing diabetes coalitions, lead by local NMA affiliate societies, comprised of the State-based diabetes prevention and control programs, local public health jurisdictions, historically black colleges, churches, community-based organizations (CBOs), and health care providers, as well as local ANMA and SNMA chapters.
- 2) Conducting outreach activities that include health fairs and screenings at events such as the NBC4 Health Expos, presentations at local churches and other CBOs, and town hall meetings.
- 3) Educating diabetes patients.
- 4) Educating physicians at the regional and national levels during NMA annual and regional meetings.

During the observance of the 2006 National Diabetes Awareness Month, a national media campaign was conducted targeting the District of Columbia, Indianapolis, and Los Angeles. This year, efforts will expand to other cities as well.

A consistent message of all outreach activities is that “it is never too late to prevent diabetes.” A second message is that “diabetic patients should know their ABC’s (A1c level, blood pressure, and cholesterol level).” The latter knowledge is paramount for patients to take an active role in the management of their disease.

The NMA Diabetes Education Program is managed by Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., Principal Investigator; Ivonne Fuller, Program Administrator; and Roslyn Douglas, the new Program Coordinator. In the next NMA E-Newsletter issue watch for the launching of the program’s new diabetes website! For information about the NMA Diabetes Education Program, contact rdouglas@nmanet.org and visit www.nmanet.org.