



Chronic Diseases

Creating Solutions to Prevent & Treat Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases are among the most common, expensive, and **preventable** health problems in the U.S. These conditions--heart disease, diabetes, cancer, stroke, arthritis and depression--plague millions of Americans. They cause lifelong disability, diminished quality of life, and ultimately death. Not only are they costly on multiple levels to the individual sufferer, but they also exert a hefty price on the nation. More than 75 percent of U.S. health care dollars goes to care for people with chronic diseases. Preventing chronic diseases requires a **multipronged approach** within and outside of the health care system.

The Abt Advantage

Abt Associates conducts rigorous studies and evaluations to inform national, state and local policy and program decisions. The goal is to improve population health outcomes associated with chronic diseases and facilitate solutions to prevent and treat these conditions.

Relevant Work

Australia Primary Health Network on Non-communicable Diseases

Abt partners with Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service to run the Central Queensland, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast Primary Health Network. The region it services has relatively high socio-economic disadvantage, and much of the region is regional, rural or remote. Non-communicable disease (NCD) is a major issue for the entire region. But there are pockets with higher prevalence of risk factors such as obesity. Primary health networks are non-government organizations that provide primary care services ranging from NCD management and maternal and child health to palliative care and mental health care. The scope of the services includes supporting a local exercise group and building capacity of general practice nurses to manage chronic diseases. Abt focuses on providing technical support such as population health needs assessments, strategic planning, research and monitoring and evaluation.



Building a Behaviorally Optimized Health Card for Type 2 Diabetes Prevention and the National Diabetes Prevention Program

Abt and its partner, ideas42, are working with a major search engine to design, implement and evaluate an online Health Card. We are using behavioral insights to encourage those who may be at risk for type 2 diabetes to learn about and prevent the disease. This approach could reach millions with a small but effective behavioral nudge to take an online diabetes risk test and seek out additional information about the National Diabetes Prevention Program (National DPP).

Evaluation of Behaviorally Based Interventions to Increase Enrollment in the CDC-Recognized Lifestyle Change Program

With nearly 84 million U.S. adults at risk for developing type 2 diabetes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) puts a high priority on increasing uptake of the National DPP lifestyle change program (LCP) by individuals at risk. To address this priority, Abt, in partnership with staff from FHI360 and ideas42, worked closely with the CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation to develop an intervention that uses behavioral insights to increase enrollment in the CDC-LCP. The CDC-Abt team conducted formative research to determine the most common behavioral barriers preventing people from enrolling in an LCP and used this information to design a structured information session.





Evaluation of the Oncology Care Model

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are collaborating with Abt to assess the impact of the Oncology Care Model, which provides incentives for better coordination of cancer care and improved access to practitioners and evidence-based cancer treatment for Medicare beneficiaries. Abt is conducting a mixed-methods evaluation of the model's impact on all-cause mortality, quality of end-of-life care, medication management, disparities in cancer care, impacts of other payer participation and unintended consequences. Abt researchers provide CMS with both rapid-cycle and comprehensive annual reporting.

HealthRise: Thought Leadership Grant to Advance Non-Communicable Disease Care

The HealthRise program, a five-year, global effort funded by the Medtronic Foundation, tested models to expand access to care for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and diabetes among underserved populations in Brazil, India, South Africa and the U.S. HealthRise aimed to contribute to the World Health Organization's goal of reducing premature mortality associated with chronic NCDs by 25 percent by 2025. The implementation and evaluation of the program identified promising innovative, scalable and sustainable community-based approaches to increase screening and improve disease control. The projects empowered patients, strengthened the frontline health workforce and advanced policies to increase the detection, management and control of CVD and diabetes.

Implementing PCOR to Increase Referral, Enrollment and Retention in Cardiac Rehabilitation through Automatic Referral with Liaison

Of the roughly 965,000 individuals in the U.S. who have a coronary event each year, only 20 percent will participate in a cardiac rehabilitation program. That's true even though there is robust evidence that doing so reduces readmissions, lowers cardiovascular mortality by nearly 30 percent and improves health-related quality of life. The Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research is working with Abt on a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research (PCOR) project to facilitate implementation of cardiac rehabilitation evidence into practice. The work will support hospitals nationwide in increasing referral, enrollment and retention in cardiac rehabilitation programs. The Abt Team, including our partners Crosby Communications, Health Research and Education Trust, WomenHeart

and a technical panel of experts, will provide technical assistance to help hospitals create automatic referrals and a liaison position, create a web-based resource center and develop and deliver a cardiac rehab training curriculum to hospitals nationwide.

Implementing and Identifying the Best Practices for Achieving Baby-Friendly Designation

Abt, the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute and Population Health Improvement Partners have brought together expertise in breastfeeding and quality improvement initiatives to improve maternity care practices that support breastfeeding. For this project, Abt and its partners are working to: 1) increase the number of hospitals in the U.S. that are designated as Baby Friendly through the recruitment of 100 participating hospitals, with 60 achieving designation within three years; 2) address geographic, socio-economic and race/ethnic disparities in breastfeeding rates; and 3) identify best practices for delivering technical assistance and training to help hospitals achieve Baby-Friendly designation.

Reducing Childhood Obesity Collective Impact Evaluation

Abt is leading the Reducing Childhood Obesity (RECO) evaluation, funded by First 5 LA, which examines the impact of RECO investments on early childhood obesity prevention in Los Angeles County. The evaluation assesses the implementation and reach of RECO investments through two interrelated studies. The impact study assesses the impact of the RECO investments on Los Angeles County as a whole and on communities within Los Angeles County. The reach study describes the extent to which First 5 LA's RECO investments target and reach the intended families and those most in need of services. The study also assesses experiences of participants and providers and explores facilitators and barriers to implementation and reach. The reach study uses various analytic techniques such as descriptive qualitative and quantitative analyses.

For More Information

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