

Diabetes Symposium 2025



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Increasing Access to Diabetes Care and Support in Rural Appalachia

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Disclosure to Participants



- Notice of Requirements For Successful Completion
 - Please refer to learning goals and objectives
 - Learners must attend the full activity and complete the evaluation in order to claim continuing education credit/hours
- Conflict of Interest (COI) and Financial Relationship Disclosures:
 - Presenter: Ashley Webb, RN, LDE- none
- Non-Endorsement of Products:
 - Accredited status does not imply endorsement by AADE, ANCC, ACPE or CDR of any commercial products displayed in conjunction with this educational activity
- Off-Label Use:
 - Participants will be notified by speakers to any product used for a purpose other than for which it was approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

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Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the participant should be able to:

1. Recognize the role of lifestyle medicine in diabetes management.
2. Identify the impact of diabetes care and support group on health outcomes.
3. Explore collaborative models for expanding diabetes care and support.
4. Evaluate methods for measuring program success and continuous improvement.

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The Power of Lifestyle Medicine

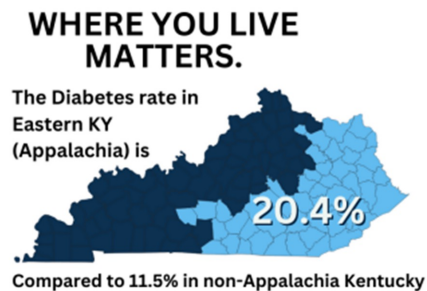
- What is Lifestyle Medicine?
- Why it works – especially in rural communities
- Powerful outcomes
- The role of the provider



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The Diabetes Crisis in Rural Appalachia

- The burden of diabetes in Appalachia
- The numbers tell a story
- What's driving the burden?
- Real-world impact



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Launching Diabetes Connection



- What is Diabetes Connection?
- Why does it matter?



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Key Program Components

- Valuable insights from local experts across the healthcare network
- Culinary medicine – 30-minute healthy meal demonstrations and nutrition education
- Referrals to DSME, DPP, community resources
- Free health screenings



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Diabetes Connection Locations



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Question #1: Is there a monthly, in-person, diabetes support group meeting in your county?

Question #2: Have you ever hosted/attended a diabetes support group meeting?

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The Power of Partnerships



- Local county extension offices
- Private philanthropy funding
- ARH healthcare network of professionals
- Local community organizations
- Investment and passion



aetna

Aetna Better Health of Kentucky



EXTENSION

University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service



Northfork
Local Food. Local Love.

Big Sandy Health Care, Inc.
"Providing Access to Quality Health Care"

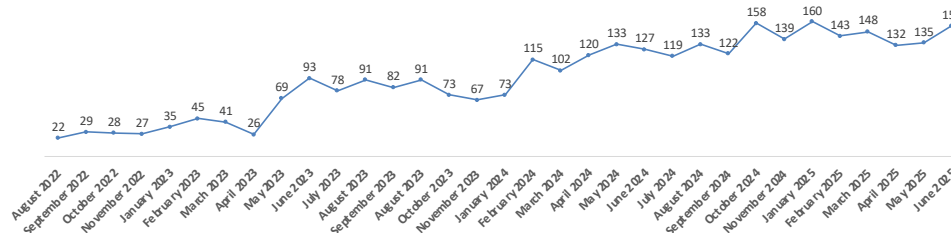
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Engagement and Growth



Engagement by the Numbers

- Grown from 2 to 10 locations
- Over 3,000 meaningful interactions
- 62% retention rate
- a virtual option for those that cannot attend in person
- 621 unique participants



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Participant Feedback



"The meetings reinforce my need to watch my diet and exercise better. It encourages me to do better."



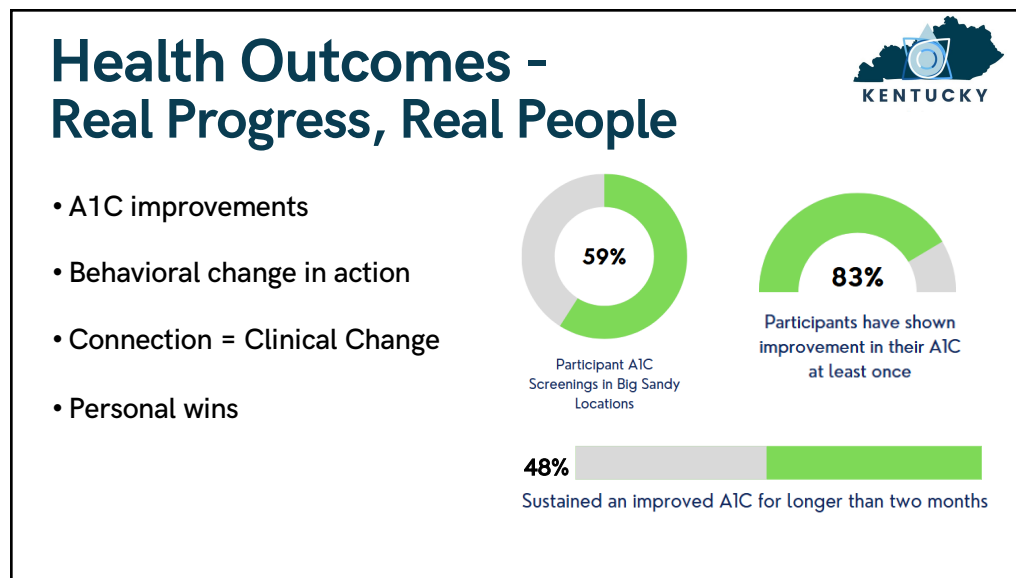


"I think the meetings have been a big help in understanding more about my diabetes and watching what I eat over the time I have attended, my A1C has improved."



"I enjoy the support group meetings very much. I find encouragement from them."

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2025 Healthy Habits Challenge

- 338 individual participants across all locations and Zoom January to June 2025
- 155 participated in weight and A1C health screenings at 7 out of 10 locations
- 82% improved their weight at least once
- 65% (51) had weight loss from first weigh in until their last
- *A total of 289.3 pounds were lost!*
- Seven people lost the goal of 5% or greater
- 118 folks had their A1C checked, with 49 of those repeating at least once
- 57% had a decrease in A1C from first screening to their last
- Three ladies lowered their A1C by one point or more – 3.1, 1.9, and 1.1



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Lessons Learned

- Trusts comes before teaching
- Flexibility over perfection
- Keep it simple and interactive
- Anticipate barriers and explore solutions
- Food is the great equalizer
- Peer support = staying power



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Sustainability and Next Steps



Our Vision Moving Forward

- Deepen local leadership
- Expand to new locations
- Strengthen partnerships
- Track outcomes
- Keep it fun, real, and community-driven



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Takeaways for Today



- Rural communities are not hopeless – they're resourceful
- Connection changes everything
- Simple + consistent + local = results
- Partnerships make it possible
- We're just getting started

Small steps. Shared stories. Big impact.



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KENTUCKY

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