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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 2, 2022

New Mexico recognizes National Diabetes Month by promoting community-based health programs

Type 2 Diabetes can be circumvented with lifestyle changes

SANTA FE— New Mexico Department of Health recognizes National Diabetes Month during November by highlighting two community-based health programs, Paths to Health NM and Kitchen Creations that offer support free of charge. Diabetes affects 200,548 New Mexicans and costs residents over \$2 billion dollars per year.

“Diabetes can become a debilitating condition that can seriously impact the lives of those diagnosed,” said **David R. Scrase M.D, acting DOH cabinet secretary**. “Luckily, most cases of type 2 diabetes can be avoided with early identification of pre-diabetes and lifestyle changes. If you are diagnosed as prediabetic, consider signing up for Paths to Health NM or Kitchen Creations programs.”

Paths to Health NM: Tools for Healthier Living is a group of programs that support people to prevent or manage diabetes, other chronic health conditions or injuries. These programs help adults gain the confidence and skills they need to manage their health needs. Diabetes Prevention programs in New Mexico are in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Fort Sumner. You can find a program in your area here.

Kitchen Creations is a set of four classes specializing in how to plan and prepare meals to manage carbohydrates and heart health. It is free to participants through funding from the New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division, Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, the American Diabetes Association, and the New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service.

According to the American Diabetes Association, diabetes is the most expensive chronic condition in our nation. Thanks to Gov. Michelle Luhan Grisham and the state legislature insulin costs are capped at \$25 per 30-day prescription in New Mexico with the passage of House Bill 292 in 2020. Today, a quarter of Americans say that insulin prices have affected their insulin usage. Average prices of a month’s supply of insulin exceed \$200 nationwide.

Diabetes can lead to other serious health conditions including blindness, kidney failure, heart failure and stroke. The most at-risk populations for diabetes are African Americans, American Indian and Alaska Natives and those with a family history of diabetes. While type 1 diabetes is not preventable, type 2 diabetes can be avoided.

Prediabetes is a condition where an individual has a higher-than-normal blood sugar level. 587,000 New Mexicans are considered pre-diabetic; only three in 10 people know they are pre-diabetic. Signs of prediabetes include:

- Being overweight
- Frequent tiredness
- Higher blood sugar
- Family history

If you are concerned you may be prediabetic it is important to have a conversation with your provider. Each year 14,611 New Mexicans are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes.

For those who are diagnosed with prediabetes, type 2 diabetes can be avoided with lifestyle changes. The risk of diabetes can be cut in half by making these simple lifestyle changes:

- Eating Healthy
- Exercising Regularly
- Speaking with a medical provider about diabetes
- Joining a Diabetes Prevention Program

Gestational diabetes is a condition in which a mother develops high blood sugar during pregnancy. 2 to 10 percent of pregnant women in the United States will develop gestational diabetes. You can prevent this condition by monitoring your blood sugar and weight during pregnancy. Talk to your healthcare provider regarding safe weight during pregnancy. Testing for gestational diabetes should happen between the 24th and 36th weeks of pregnancy. Normally, your blood sugar returns to normal after your baby is born.

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NMDOH

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The Department of Health works to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and deliver services to all New Mexicans. As New Mexico's largest state agency, DOH offers public health services in all 33 counties and collaborates with 23 Native American tribes, Pueblos and nations.