



Title: Addressing the health needs of rural communities: Measuring the implementation and impact of an evidence-based diabetes prevention program adapted to local contexts in Northern British Columbia

Researchers:

Dr. Mary Jung, Nominated Principal Investigator: University of British Columbia

Dr. Corliss Bean, Co-Applicant: Brock University

Dr. Jennifer Davis, Co-Applicant: University of British Columbia

Dr. Chelsea Pelletier, Co-Applicant: University of Northern British Columbia

Research area: Prediabetes

Award: End Diabetes 100 Award, 2021-2024

Summary:

Northern British Columbia (BC) is comprised primarily of remote and rural towns that do not have capacity to deliver diabetes prevention services, despite high rates of type 2 diabetes (T2D). Small Steps for Big Changes (SSBC) is a diet and exercise counselling intervention that has been effective as a community-based program for lowering T2D risk in individuals with prediabetes. The next phase is to expand delivery of SSBC to five rural community sites where T2D rates are high and no prediabetes programs exist. Community-delivery is necessary for successful uptake and meaningful healthcare impact. Having established a formal partnership with the YMCA of Northern BC, we are well-positioned to deliver and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the SSBC program adapted to rural sites.

In Year 1, the program will be adapted through partnership with site-level implementation teams, and YMCA staff will receive training for program delivery. Delivery of SSBC to community members (n=48/site; total N = 240) will begin in Year 2. Number of staff trained and patients enrolled in the program, patient attendance, sessions delivered as planned, delivery costs, and number of sites continuing to deliver the program will be assessed in Years 2 and 3. YMCA staff and SSBC patients will be interviewed on program receptivity. Changes in patient health (e.g., blood glucose, weight, physical activity, diet) will be measured for one year following program completion. Evaluating the implementation and effectiveness of SSBC will result in a template for scaling-out to the many rural communities of Canada.