



PREVENTION | POPULATION HEALTH

Project: Working together to prevent Type 2 Diabetes in Black, African, and Caribbean Communities in Peel, Ontario

Through donor support, Dr. Ian Zenlea, Pediatric Endocrinologist, Clinician Scientist, and Lead for the Family and Child Health Initiative at Trillium Health Partners and the Institute for Better Health, is working to prevent type 2 diabetes in communities in Peel.

In healthy individuals, blood sugars are controlled by a hormone called insulin, which lowers blood sugar levels. For people with type 2 diabetes, they can no longer produce or use enough insulin to control their blood sugars, which can lead to health complications such as nerve damage, sight loss, heart disease, kidney failure, anxiety, amputations, and even death.

The disease is a significant health concern in Peel, Ontario – by 2025, one in six adults living in Peel will have type 2 diabetes.

People from Black, African and Caribbean communities have a higher risk of type 2 diabetes and related complications. The risk of developing type 2 diabetes is carried across generations, requiring a family-based approach to diabetes prevention.

Dr. Zenlea is building on community advocacy work by mobilizing community agencies, service providers, researchers, and community caregivers who have prediabetes, gestational diabetes, or type 2 diabetes. Together, they will co-design community-based type 2 diabetes prevention interventions that are family-based and culturally sensitive to Black, African and Caribbean communities.

Their findings will support ongoing advocacy and activism to create more equitable and inclusive interventions to prevent diabetes. The co-designed interventions can also be adapted to other communities across Canada.