

AMA Improving Health Outcomes: Quick facts and answers to frequently asked questions

- One hundred million people in the United States have diabetes or prediabetes.
- Nearly 26 million people live with diabetes in the United States—8.3 percent of the population. An estimated one in three U.S. adults—about 79 million people—has prediabetes.
- Cardiovascular disease accounts for one-third of all deaths in the United States.
- About one in three adults—an estimated 68 million Americans—has high blood pressure.
- About one of every six adult Americans has high cholesterol.
- The direct and indirect cost of cardiovascular disease and diabetes is more than \$535 billion a year.

**all above data attributable to CDC*

Why cardiovascular disease and diabetes?

The American Medical Association chose to focus on cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke) and type 2 diabetes because these conditions touch millions of patients and nearly all physicians, cause enormous suffering and death, and incur significant costs to our economy. Cardiovascular disease accounts for one-third of all deaths in our nation, and one-in-three adults could have diabetes by 2050 if current trends continue. The direct and indirect cost of cardiovascular disease and diabetes is more than \$535 billion a year. With proper intervention, the effects of these conditions can be dramatically reduced, leading to a healthier nation and reducing health care spending. The AMA is in a unique position to reach physicians in all practice settings and specialties and bring them together with communities and public and private sector organizations to achieve measurable improvements in health outcomes for cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Where will you focus your efforts first?

The AMA will begin its work on improving health outcomes by first addressing key risk factors for cardiovascular disease and diabetes—namely high blood pressure and prediabetes. Despite the availability of therapies and prevention measures, a large proportion of the U.S. population—including those currently receiving clinical care—do not have their high blood pressure or prediabetes addressed adequately. Several health systems have succeeded in reducing these risk factors, but these examples have rarely been replicated. The AMA will collaborate with other organizations focused on addressing these risk factors to help develop new approaches to achieving

better control of blood pressure and preventing progression of prediabetes to diabetes.

The AMA will help physicians connect their patients who are at risk of developing type 2 diabetes with evidence-based prevention programs that are aimed at improving diet and physical activity and achieving moderate weight loss. We will also focus on improving outcomes for the 30 million people with high blood pressure who are receiving medical care but do not have their blood pressure under control. We will share our findings so they can be implemented broadly.

How will the AMA collaborate with ongoing national initiatives to improve health outcomes for cardiovascular disease and diabetes and what are the AMA's short-term goals?

The AMA will work side by side with physicians and care teams, patients and families, communities and public health agencies to reduce the prevalence of cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

We are collaborating with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Million Hearts® initiative and have adopted its goal of achieving healthy blood pressure for an additional 10 million Americans with high blood pressure by 2017. We will focus on improving outcomes for the 30 million people with

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hypertension who are receiving medical care but do not have their blood pressure under control. We will work with the Armstrong Institute for Patient Safety and Quality at Johns Hopkins University to improve care for patients by developing a model for better detection and management of high blood pressure and more effectively sharing the latest clinical practice guidelines.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Diabetes Prevention Program is focused on delaying or preventing the progression of prediabetes to diabetes through lifestyle interventions aimed at improving diet and physical activity and achieving moderate weight loss. Under an effort funded by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation, the AMA will collaborate with YMCA of the USA to help attain a joint target of 10,000 additional Medicare participants in the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program. The AMA will focus on increasing referrals of people with prediabetes to local YMCA program sites and enhancing communication between clinical practices and the YMCA program sites.

How will you report on progress toward achieving these goals?

The AMA is committed to sharing our progress toward achieving goals for improving cardiovascular and diabetes health. We will create an interactive dashboard on the AMA website to share information, highlight efforts the AMA is supporting or directly engaged in, and to track progress in meeting performance and outcome goals. We will also convene experts to determine the best ways to provide useful information on improving cardiovascular and diabetes health to physicians and patients.

Where will the AMA focus its advocacy efforts for improving health outcomes?

The AMA will continue its long-standing advocacy efforts to ensure health, wellness and well-being for Americans of all backgrounds and in all communities. The AMA will review the scientific literature and AMA policies to identify high-impact focus areas relevant to improving cardiovascular and diabetes health and reducing health disparities. The AMA recognizes that improving health outcomes will require advocacy at the federal as well as state level, and we will support the advocacy efforts of state medical societies with shared goals. Given the importance of this work, we will also coordinate our health outcomes advocacy efforts with national medical specialty societies and other organizations that are committed to improving cardiovascular and diabetes health.