

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EVALUATION OF
The Chronic Disease
Prevention Initiative
(CDPI) IN MANITOBA (2005–2010)



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How Did We Do?

Manitoba's Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative (CDPI) has had a significant and positive impact on chronic disease prevention in communities and regions across the province.

Community-led prevention works. That's the theme from the evaluation of Manitoba's five-year chronic disease prevention initiative, also promoted as Healthy Together Now. When people come together with a plan of action, community supports and a way to carry out their plan, healthy changes occur.

How was the Evaluation Done?

The evaluator interviewed program leaders and participants and studied project data to see whether CDPI had achieved the goals it had originally set. These goals were:

1. To sponsor community-led activities that would help prevent chronic disease.
2. To get organizations, communities, regions, and government working together to prevent chronic disease.
3. To join with and build on existing prevention programs.
4. To increase skills, knowledge and ability to carry out prevention programs to address different levels of health.

The CDPI evaluation highlights what worked well, what needs to continue and what needs to be improved as community-led prevention programs move forward in Manitoba.

Many Successes

During the first five years of CDPI (2005–2010), communities, regions and government used creativity and partnerships to make the project a success. CDPI achieved each of its four goals.



Goal #1 To sponsor community-led activities which would prevent chronic disease in Manitoba.

- Nearly 1,200 chronic disease prevention activities were planned and carried out in participating communities over 36 months. They targeted unhealthy eating, physical inactivity, and smoking.
- Between April 2006 and March 2009, about 109,000 people participated in CDPI activities, with an average of 197 participants per activity.
- Community residents, various partners, volunteers, regional health authorities, and government staff worked together to carry out these activities.
- Many activities did not cost a lot, thanks to volunteers, partnerships, and use of existing staff and facilities.
- Activities were affordable to all groups, such as families, youth and seniors.
- Volunteers often outnumbered paid staff 3 to 1 in CDPI activities.

Goal #2 To get organizations, communities, regions, and government working together to prevent chronic disease.

- Community organizations and RHAs gave staff time, donated space and equipment.
- Communities built partnerships. Communities that had not previously worked together are now doing so.
- Partnerships were created and existing ones were strengthened.
- Much work was done with a small amount of money.

Goal #3 To join with and build on existing prevention programs.

- CDPI joined existing community and regional programs, and even those in other communities. For example, community kitchens were brought to schools in neighbouring communities and CDPI became part of the Wellness Screening program in Assiniboine region.
- CDPI joined existing prevention initiatives, like Get Better Together, *in motion*, and Healthy Schools.

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- CDPI materials have been widely distributed, in some cases nationally. As an example, by 2010 some 130 of Interlake's "What's in your lunch?" display boards had been distributed via the Dairy Producers website.
 - Healthier lifestyles are becoming part of the "cultural norm" in participating communities. For example, some groups are serving healthy food at meetings.

Goal #4 To increase skills, knowledge and ability to carry out prevention programs to address different levels of health.

- People from many different groups had a chance to get involved in healthy living-related activities, helping to plan, lead and organize activities.
- Communities networked to share resources, promoted better health and wellness, learned new ways to cope with stress and became role models.
- CDPI partners became better at sharing information and collecting data.
- Communities became better at identifying champions who could encourage individuals to participate in prevention activities.

Moving Forward

Everyone involved in CDPI learned from the experience. The evaluation identified ways to make community-led prevention programs more effective in the future:

- Support more communication so everyone is aware of other healthy living activities around the province.
- Get more people and groups participating and this will lead to more new ideas.
- Give many opportunities, such as conferences and workshops, for participants to talk to each other about what's happening so they can learn from others and share their stories.
- Support sharing skills, knowledge and new information about what works in prevention programs, and why.
- Find more ways of promoting mental wellness and reducing tobacco use.
- Get more people involved in planning, especially those who don't usually get involved, like youth, elders, those with disabilities and culturally diverse populations.
- Foster and develop "champions" who are willing and able to lead community activities.