Evaluating the Implementation of the Diabetes Prevention Program in an Integrated Health System

WHAT WILL WE DO?
In 2018, Medicare began covering diabetes prevention programs for beneficiaries with prediabetes. These programs are effective, but many questions remain about how to deploy them. The Kaiser Permanente Northwest health plan (KPNW) is rolling out a diabetes prevention program, but health plan leaders need to know how best to recruit members for these programs, what will keep them engaged, the effect on clinical outcomes, and comparative cost-effectiveness.

With a grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, the Center for Health Research will thoroughly evaluate this new KPNW program. Our study will follow over 5,000 members with prediabetes who are offered in-person or online diabetes prevention programs. The study will follow these members for a full year to assess their weight and hemoglobin A1C (blood sugar)—using data from the electronic health record—as well as their diet, physical activity, mental health, and quality of life. We’ll also conduct 100 interviews to learn about factors that help members enroll in and stay with these programs.

Our research team is led by Dr. Stephanie Fitzpatrick at the Center for Health Research and includes two members from the KPNW department that is implementing the program—Health Engagement and Wellness Services (HEWS) Director Sarah Grall and HEWS Program Manager Kristy Funk. Working together with their health plan colleagues, CHR investigators will help KPNW leaders understand which mix of programs will best meet our members’ needs.

WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL THIS STUDY MAKE?
Medicare’s policy change presents an opportunity to study which kinds of diabetes prevention programs health plans should offer and what they cost to deliver. Our study will give KPNW health plan leaders much-needed information about what it costs to deliver this new program and how well it works to prevent our members from developing diabetes.