

National Indian Health Board



March 14, 2014

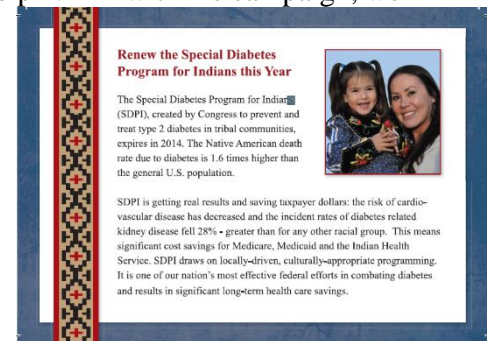
Special Diabetes for Indians Renewal Tool Kit

The Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI) expires on **September 30, 2014!** Indian Country must stand up for this important program before it is too late. SDPI is changing the diabetes landscape in Indian Country. Today, the program supports 404 diabetes treatment and prevention programs in 35 states. Community-driven, culturally appreciate programs have led to significant advances in diabetes education, treatment and prevention.

Last fall, 75 percent of the House and Senate signed a letter supporting the renewal of SDPI – but we are not done yet! Typically, SDPI is renewed as part of the “Medicare Extenders” package that accompanies the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) “fix” for physician Medicare reimbursement. We urge you to please contact your Representatives and urge them to **pass the SDPI as part of the Medicare Extenders by March 31, 2014.**

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- 1) **SDPI Post cards:** Postcards are a simple, cost-effective way to get the attention of Members of Congress. The more we can demonstrate that this is a program that is deeply cared about – and is getting real results – the more likely we are to see it renewed! To help NIHB with his campaign, we ask that you distribute these postcards to Tribes and SDPI grantees in your Area and have individuals fill out their name and address. To receive postcards please email your name, address and number of desired postcards to Jordan Daniel at jdaniel@nihb.org.
- 2) **Direct Contact with Member of Congress:** Please call or email your Representatives and Senators and urge them to push for a renewal of SDPI in the Medicare Extender package on the SGR Fix. You can find your Representative by visiting www.house.gov or your Senator by visiting www.senate.gov.
- 3) **Host an SDPI Site Visit:** NIHB asks that SDPI grantees contact their Member of Congress immediately to visit their program. By doing this, you will be able to demonstrate the excellent outcomes of the program and give congressional representatives first-hand information on the importance of SDPI to their constituents. Site visits are key if we want to turn a Member of Congress from just a *supporter* into an *advocate*. NIHB has a tool kit development that provides a step-by-step guide available at www.nihb.org/sdpi/advocacy.php.
- 4) **Send a letter from your Tribe:** You can also send a letter from your Tribe to support SDPI. A sample letter is below.



For more information on the NIHB’s SDPI renewal campaign please visit www.nihb.org/sdpi or contact Caitrin Shuy, Manager of Congressional relations at (202) 507-4085 or cshuy@nihb.org.

<SAMPLE SDPI SUPPORT LETTER>

Date _____

The Honorable _____

Office Building Address

Washington, D.C. 205____

Dear Senator/Representative,

As a constituent who knows first-hand the tremendous burden diabetes places on my community, I am writing to let you know about the lifesaving Special Diabetes Program for Indians (SDPI). At almost 16.1 percent, American Indians and Alaska Natives experience the highest age adjusted prevalence of diabetes among all U.S. racial and ethnic groups.

With the deadline of September 30th in mind, I urge you to support a multi-year reauthorization of the SDPI by March 31st of this year. We have a critical opportunity to have this program renewed by March 31, when Congress must renew the Medicare Extender legislation that is typically the legislative vehicle for SDPI. Without an immediate, long-term reauthorization, critical infrastructure that has greatly contributed to the success of SDPI, especially staff, will be severely impacted by any delay. Also, because SDPI is a grant-funded program, the Indian Health Service requires four months to advertise and complete the grant process.

Today, SDPI supports over 404 Indian Health Service, Tribal, and Urban programs in 35 states. SDPI has also led to significant advances in diabetes education, prevention, and treatment. In (ENTER STATE), SDPI programs are making a real difference. **(Please add a few sentences about SDPI-supported programs in your Area and/or Tribal Community)**. SDPI is saving lives, transforming communities and the way diabetes is treated, and saving our federal healthcare system dollars as well.

My (ENTER COMMUNITY NAME OR TRIBE) relies on Congressional support of SDPI over the years. We would be honored to show you the difference our SDPI program is making for Tribal communities in (ENTER CITY, STATE) who are dealing with the burdens of diabetes. We want to show you first-hand what we are accomplishing with SDPI dollars. Please contact (ENTER NAME OF GRANTEE) at (ENTER PHONE NUMBER) or (ENTER EMAIL) to arrange a visit to our program.

I recognize that the budget environment is difficult and tough decisions had to be made. I am happy to let you know more about the tremendous return on the federal investment demonstrated by SDPI. Your support for this program would be greatly appreciated by _____ **(insert name of Tribe)**.

To learn more about diabetes in AI/AN communities and stories of how SDPI is saving lives please visit <http://nihb.org/sdpi>.

Sincerely,