

# Florida Hospital, Orlando, FL

## The Road to Understanding and Eliminating Health Disparities: The Florida Hospital Journey

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**Background:** In 2011, a community health study revealed a prevalence of diabetes in Eatonville, FL of 24%, three times the national rate and twice the national prevalence for African Americans who comprise most of Eatonville’s population. As a result, Healthy Central Florida, a group created by Florida Hospital and the Winter Park Health Foundation, worked with Eatonville leaders and residents to support the creation of Healthy Eatonville Place (HEP), a diabetes education and research center with objectives to provide resources for prevention, early diagnosis, and support for diabetes.

**Methods:** The first step in creation of the diabetes education and research center was the completion of a health risk assessment study to characterize individual risk factors and characteristics of the Eatonville community. Classes focusing on promotion of exercise, nutrition, and diabetes counseling were provided.

**Results:** The health risk assessment revealed that 67% of respondents were female, the average age was 54.2 years, and 89% identified as black/African American. In terms of health disparities, 48% reported some degree of food insecurity, 58% were unemployed, 32% were uninsured, and 32% had not seen a healthcare provider other than in the ED during the past year. A total of 3,924 visits to HEP occurred from March 2015 through March 2016. A comparison of Florida Hospital participants before and after enrollment in the HEP program showed a decrease in their number of total ED visits but an increase in the number of admissions from ED visits.

**Conclusion:** HEP had a positive impact on community diabetes education and improved access to healthcare services.

### PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN – Characterization of Efforts to Study and Eliminate Health Disparities: The Florida Hospital Journey

Vision Statement	Our vision is a community where every patient received equitable and high-quality care.
Team Objectives	The main objective of our project was to perform an assessment of current and past efforts by our organization to characterize and mitigate health disparities, including efforts related to formal evaluations of the specific healthcare needs of the communities that we serve. Our ultimate goal was to use our participation in NI V to learn where our institution was in our journey to eliminate disparities, with the intent of identifying and increasing awareness around challenges and opportunities related to this effort.
Success Factors	The most successful part of our work was increased awareness at our institution about the importance of developing a plan to study health disparities in the communities that we serve that is aligned with the organization’s strategic priorities.
Barriers	The largest barriers we encountered were limited engagement and support when working on areas related to studying and addressing health disparities, time constraints and competing demands, and lack of knowledge related to factors that influence and determine health disparities.
Lessons Learned	The single most important piece of advice to provide another team embarking on a similar initiative is the need for strong support and commitment from clinical and nonclinical leaders and key stakeholders in your organization to be successful.