

# WE ASKED. YOU RESPONDED.

## Nearly 13,000 shared your thoughts and concerns.

### We're listening...

Last fall, we began an ongoing conversation with North Dakotans.



It started with a survey sent to Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota (BCBSND) members. Responses poured in by the thousands.

Responses are now streaming in from a second survey recently sent to areas we didn't reach last fall.



The discussion moved into neighborhoods through a statewide series of community forums. Look for additional locations this spring.



It continues today, online. Join in the conversation at: [BCBSND.com/BlueInsight](http://BCBSND.com/BlueInsight)

### Taking action...

You want us to lead in finding solutions—and we are. BCBSND has been working internally and with others across the state on rising costs, accessibility, quality of care and many other issues brought up at the statewide forums.

### And continuing the conversation.

This series from BCBSND answers the questions North Dakotans are asking and tells you what we're doing about them.

### One thing you can do:

Use wellness options to stay healthy

- Since you spend so much of your day at work, start a culture of wellness at work with the FREE tools available to any North Dakota business at [NDWorksiteWellness.org](http://NDWorksiteWellness.org).
- If you're insured through your employer, invite a BCBSND education consultant in for a group lunch and learn about a variety of topics. Your HR representative will have the contact information.
- On your own, make living well your hobby. Eat right. Get active. Try a new sport. Go outside and play with your kids.

You asked,

## “How do we encourage people to live healthier lives?”

It was a common question at the community forums. People don't intentionally set out to be unhealthy, but as a society, we've come to rely on health care to fix us when we're sick, rather than focus on maintaining our health.

**Preventable chronic diseases account for 75% of all direct health care costs in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>**

Chronic illnesses like diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and heart disease are among the most common and costly. They are also largely preventable. And they are reaching epidemic proportions, driving up the cost of health care and health insurance for everybody.

#### Obesity is one problem.

In 1980, less than half of U.S. adults were overweight or obese. Now, about 70% of adults are considered overweight or obese.<sup>2</sup> The prevalence of obesity among children and adolescents has tripled since 1980.<sup>3</sup> Obese kids will start having health problems earlier and those problems will persist throughout their lives.



North Dakota's obesity rates have increased nearly 37% in the last decade and 70% since 1995.<sup>4</sup> That results in more people using more health care services to treat associated conditions such as:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- Joint problems
- Other chronic conditions

We can't always avoid getting sick, but we can do a lot to improve and maintain our good health by making good lifestyle choices and avoiding risk-related behaviors. And that will go a long way toward helping to hold down rising health care costs.

### What is BCBSND doing to promote healthy living?

We provide a variety of tools, incentives and information to help people live healthy lifestyles and prevent and manage chronic conditions, including:

- A comprehensive online wellness tool focusing on nutrition, exercise and lifestyle management
- Promotion of physical activity through the health club credit program
- Preventive screenings in health plans
- Education on health care issues, trends and costs
- Pediatric obesity toolkit for providers
- Tobacco cessation programs
- Several initiatives to promote better nutrition and physical activity for kids, soon to be announced

### It pays to stay well.

One of our more significant initiatives is MediQHome, a statewide program focused on preventing and managing common chronic conditions that cost North Dakotans in health and in premium costs. MediQHome is already demonstrating improved clinical and financial outcomes, including:

- Reduced use of emergency and inpatient services for complications related to poor chronic disease control
- Reduced inpatient spending on complications related to poor chronic disease management

Because we already have high quality care in North Dakota and a largely integrated health care system, a cooperative program like MediQHome can have a big impact in preventing and managing diseases.

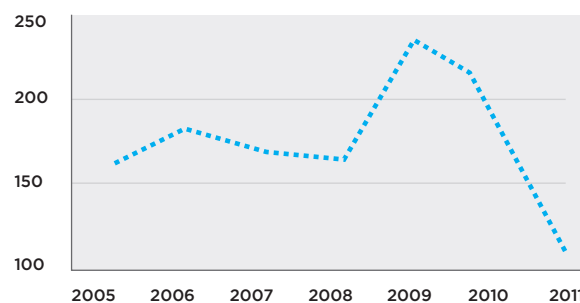
<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Chronic Diseases (2009)

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (2010)

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Obesity Rate Data (2008)

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Prevalence and Trends Data (1995-2010)

### Intracoronary Procedures Per Year



Since BCBSND launched the statewide MediQHome program in 2009, North Dakotans have needed 53.1% fewer heart catheterizations, a procedure to detect and potentially fix blockage in the arteries.

Source: Treo Solutions analysis of claims from North Dakota's six largest integrated health care systems.

**WE'RE STILL LISTENING**  
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