

POSTER ABSTRACTS
8th Annual HMO Research Network Conference
April 9-10, 2002 Long Beach, CA

Chronic Disease
32

**Improving Diabetes Care: Common Elements of Successful
Primary Care Programs**

Patrick J. O'Connor, MD, MPH - HealthPartners Research Foundation

William A. Rush, PhD - HealthPartners Research Foundation

JoAnn M. Sperl-Hillen, MD - HealthPartners

Nicolaas P. Pronk, PhD - HealthPartners Center for Health Promotion

Theresa Murray, MEd - Quello Clinic, Ltd.

Background: To identify common elements in published descriptions of successful diabetes care improvement initiatives in primary care practice settings.

Methods: We searched the medical literature and did extensive personal networking to identify reports of successful improvement efforts that targeted all patients with diabetes in defined practice settings. We analyzed reports and talked with many investigators in order to understand what elements were commonly found in these successful efforts.

Results: There were 6 foundational elements and 5 operational tools used by a majority of successful primary care practices. Foundational elements included strong leadership, dedicated resources, sophisticated clinical databases, clinical guidelines, organized care teams, and efforts to activate patients. Clinic-level operational tools included (a) identification of target group, (b) electronic monitoring of clinical status, (c) prioritization of patients, (d) active outreach, and (e) visit planning.

Conclusions: These common elements provide a coherent and basic roadmap that can be used to plan clinical quality improvement for chronic disease care and preventive care in primary care practices.