The Burden of Diabetes in Wisconsin

Diabetes is an epidemic in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), over 37 million Americans have diabetes and face its devastating consequences. What’s true nationwide is also true in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin’s diabetes epidemic:

- Approximately 406,445 people in Wisconsin, or 8.8% of the adult population, have diagnosed diabetes.
- An additional 135,000 people in Wisconsin have diabetes but don’t know it, greatly increasing their health risk.
- There are 1,560,000 people in Wisconsin, 34.4% of the adult population, who have prediabetes with blood glucose levels that are higher than normal but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes.
- Every year an estimated 34,766 people in Wisconsin are diagnosed with diabetes.

Diabetes is expensive:

People with diabetes have medical expenses approximately 2.3 times higher than those who do not have diabetes.

- Total direct medical expenses for diagnosed diabetes in Wisconsin were estimated at $4.1 billion in 2017.
- In addition, another $1.4 billion was spent on indirect costs from lost productivity due to diabetes.

Improving lives, preventing diabetes and finding a cure:

In 2023, the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at the National Institutes of Health invested $4,688,005 in diabetes-related research projects in Wisconsin. The Division of Diabetes Translation at the CDC provided $2,877,553 in diabetes prevention and educational grants in Wisconsin in 2021.

Sources include:

- Research expenditures: 2023 NIDDK funding, report.nih.gov/award/index.cfm; 2021 CDC diabetes funding, fundingprofiles.cdc.gov/FundingProfiles/FundingQuery

Diagnosed diabetes costs an estimated $5.5 billion in Wisconsin each year.

The serious complications include heart disease, stroke, amputation, end-stage kidney disease, blindness—and death.