

## **Dining with Diabetes – Better Skills for Better Quality of Life**

*Program helps people manage their diabetes through better food and cooking knowledge*

### **Public Health Problem**

- West Virginia has a much higher rate of diabetes than the rest of the nation and the people with diabetes are more likely to be obese than the general population.
- Diabetes patient education is an effective strategy for preventing long-term complications from diabetes that are related to obesity and poor blood sugar control.
- One of the Healthy People 2010 national health objectives cites the need to reach more people who have diabetes with formal diabetes education.

### **Program**

- The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, in collaboration with West Virginia University Extension Service and local healthcare professionals, offers the Dining with Diabetes course to increase self-efficacy and support lifestyle behavior changes related to diabetes self-management.
- The course is offered at no cost to participants who may attend without referral and has reached six thousand people in the state.
- Each class has a lecture component and a cooking demonstration, with food sampling for participants who may attend with a companion. Participant's blood sugar and blood pressure are monitored at the beginning and end of the course.

### **Impact**

- Results of pre- and post-tests show that participants feel more confidence in their ability to accomplish the difficult task of managing their diabetes.
- Participants also report an increase in healthy food choices.
- The course has been adopted in twenty-five states, allowing them to use their program dollars for implementation rather than program development. West Virginia partners also offer training to professionals in other states to extend the course's reach.
- The Northeast Extension Directors' Award of Excellence was awarded to Dining with Diabetes.