



May 2, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Diabetes Coalition of Palm Beach County Board of Directors, we want to express our sincere appreciation to Keiser University, Vista Parkway faculty, staff, and students for the incredible partnership that has developed and evolved over the last two years.

In 2010, Palm Healthcare Foundation convened a panel of local health leaders concerned with the increasing prevalence of diabetes in Palm Beach County, and who had an interest in exploring local issues and solutions related to diabetes prevention and management. In March of 2012, Barbara Jacobowitz, who currently serves as Health Services Administration University Department Chair at the Keiser University, Vista Campus, and a trustee of Palm Healthcare Foundation, arranged for two state officials, who were instrumental in crafting the Florida Diabetes Health System Strategic Plan, to provide an overview of how a local initiative could link to and support the state strategic plan. Hence, the Diabetes Coalition of Palm Beach County was formed.

The Diabetes Coalition, which is a nonprofit voluntary alliance, serves as the "hub," "clearing-house," or "community connector" for those individuals and families living with, or at risk for developing diabetes. This work would not be possible or successful without the efforts of our dedicated network of over 50+ member organizations and volunteers who selflessly give of their time and talents to help make Palm Beach County a national model for preventing and controlling diabetes. Our member organizations include hospitals, safety-net clinics, health plans, universities and schools, government and social service agencies, businesses, and individuals having or impacted by diabetes. We are a member-community-partner-driven organization.

Since 2012, we have screened over 10,000 individuals in the county, with over 55% having an elevated risk score for developing diabetes. These individuals are linked to a health care provider for further assessment which includes referral to free clinics and *Enroll Palm Beach*, if uninsured. While we engage in various educational outreach and prevention events throughout the year, many of these activities happen during Diabetes Month each November. Multi-ethnic and non-English speaking populations are also targeted by having bilingual providers and volunteers and offering all assessments and materials in English, Spanish, and Creole.

Beginning in November 2016, the Coalition offered Hemoglobin A1c tests at designated diabetes screening pilot sites. We can now measure average blood glucose over the past 2-3 months, providing a more accurate reading and prediabetes risk score. In fall 2017 in addition to expanding the A1c tests to more screening sites, we implemented a new Diabetes Risk Assessment screening tool, which provides a more in-depth assessment, including Body Mass Index (BMI), diabetes risk assessment, and A1c scores.

During the past two years, Keiser University leadership team, faculty, staff, and students have supported and partnered with us throughout this journey. Since the Coalition doesn't currently have permanent

office space, when the Coalition has needed storage, meeting, and room space to prepare materials and screening site supplies for Diabetes Month (50+sites and over 3,500 participant bags) and countywide educational events, Keiser has welcomed us with open arms. We are looking forward to soon having permanent office space on the Keiser-Vista Parkway campus.

In 2016, the Diabetes Coalition entered into a partnership with Keiser University to facilitate and implement strategies for diabetes risk assessment screening data input and analyses. Barbara Jacobowitz currently serves as the Interim Chair of the Coalition Board of Directors and the Chair of the Coalition's Data Committee. With her leadership and the additional expertise of faculty, we are able to complete more in-depth, targeted analyses.

As the Coalition moved forward last year in changing to electronic "real-time" diabetes risk assessment screening results and reports via tablets, we worked in tandem with Brian McCall, MSITM, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, to ensure that the tablets purchased would provide the elements we need now and grow with us as we move forward. We will fully implement the use of tablets later in 2018.

With the expanded implementation of A1c tests this past year, we worked with Keiser faculty to recruit and train nursing and chiropractic students, who were integral members of our team. The students helped to administer the Diabetes Risk Assessments and A1c tests at *November Diabetes Awareness Day*, where over 200 tests were performed. In February 2018 Keiser University hosted its inaugural *Diabetes Awareness Day* for students, staff, faculty and the community, where again free Diabetes Risk Assessments and A1c tests were offered and administered by the students to all participants.

In 2018, we look forward to further strengthening and expanding this partnership. We would like to acknowledge Dr. Kim Lea, Dr. Anthony Berrios; Barbara Jacobowitz, MS; Marjorie Roache, MS, RN; Janet Sikora Amendola, DC, MSHAPI, DIBCN; Brian McCall, MSITM; Ron Furst, MS; other faculty; staff; and the students for their continued support, and as we move forward in our fight to conquer diabetes in Palm Beach County. We truly thank you for your ongoing support and commitment!

*You All Absolutely Rock!!!*

Sincerely,



Debby Walters  
Executive Director  
Diabetes Coalition of Palm Beach County