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If you can't engage them they won't attend

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Abstract
Diabetes is a prevalent and chronic disease both in Australia and internationally, affecting 347 million people worldwide. Estimates suggest diabetes will be the seventh leading cause of death by 2030 (WHO 2015).

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Health promotion program: IF you can’t engage them – they won’t attend!

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The names of participants: Spencer Walton and Bob McDonald

A suggested caption: Connecting and engaging in health promotion
Diabetes is a prevalent and chronic disease both in Australia and internationally, affecting 347 million people worldwide. Estimates suggest that diabetes will be the 7th leading cause of death by 2030 (WHO 2015). There is strong evidence to suggest that physical activity improves diabetes outcomes by assisting glucose control, promoting weight management and preventing related complications (Hu et al 2014), as well as improving an individual’s overall health and wellness (Law et al 2013). Despite the evidence, there is reportedly still a lack of compliance and adherence to exercise regimens by people with diabetes (Jennings et al 2013). An important measure in addressing this deficiency is to establish why people with diabetes engage (or not) with health promotion programs. Gaining this understanding can inform and guide the design, promotion and delivery of future health promotion programs in a specific, targeted, and disease appropriate manner so that people want to attend. If you don’t engage with them, they won’t attend.

The author’s research explored the meaning that older people with diabetes attribute to being involved in a health promotion program. A qualitative hermeneutic phenomenological methodology was adopted to capture information. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with participants of the ‘Beat It’ diabetes program, which incorporated physical activity and lifestyle education over a 12 week period. The primary goal of the intervention was to enhance the health and wellness of people with diabetes. A number of themes emerged from the analysis of participant interview and focus group transcripts. The overarching theme, and critical point of difference, for effective health promotion programs, is person-centeredness. Person-centered program efficacy is seen as key
to ensuring the effective design, promotion and delivery of health promotion programs for older people with diabetes.

As RN/RMs, our delivery of care and referral to programs, needs to be mindful of the expertise of the person with lived experience on their own journey. Valuing lived experience enhances delivery of care and referral of services to be contextualised through the lens of the participants. Person centredness becomes embedded. Whether someone will engage in recovery or in additional services is determined by the person themselves. Results from this research, can lead to better understanding of how engagement, particularly of older people, in health promotion programs can be enhanced.

References
