The SHIELD Program

"Spiritual Health Initiative for Eliminating and Lowering Diabetes"

Generation 4 and Brookland-Lakeview Empowerment Center

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SHIELD PROGRAM
Spiritual Health Initiative for Eliminating and Lowering Diabetes

Funded by the BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina Foundation to support the goals of Diabetes Free SC.

Summary of the Project

A diabetes prevention and management education intervention program designed for adults aged 18 and older. The SHIELD Program includes the following key elements:

- **Duration and Format:** 12-Week, cohort-based health intervention including clinical pre- and post- lab assessments and pre- and post- diabetes knowledge evaluations.
- **Target Population:** Communities of color, focusing on diabetes prevention and management. All adults are welcome; classes offered in English and Spanish.
- **Core Approach:** Integration of spiritual wellness, health education, lifestyle strategies. Use experts in the field such as diabetes educators, community health workers to deliver health education.
- **Participant Empowerment:** Equips participants with practical tools for sustainable health improvements.
- **Cultural and Spiritual Sensitivity:** Honors cultural, social and spiritual needs of participants.

Primary Goal

- **Main Objective:** To prevent and manage diabetes in communities of color by integrating spiritual wellness, health education, and practical lifestyle strategies into a 12-week, cohort-based intervention that empowers participants to improve their long-term health.
- **Long-Term Vision and Expected Outcomes:** The SHIELD Program aims to achieve lasting health improvements for participants, their families, and communities. Through sustainable behavior change, strengthened peer and faith-based support, and enhanced cultural and spiritual resilience, it seeks to reduce diabetes risk, improve disease management, and provide a scalable model for faith-based health interventions.

Project Structure: Framework & Methodology

Weekly Cohort Sessions: Participants engage in 12 weeks of structured sessions integrating clinical data monitoring, interactive workshops, and peer support.

Holistic Health Approach: Program addresses physical, mental, and spiritual wellness to promote sustainable lifestyle change.

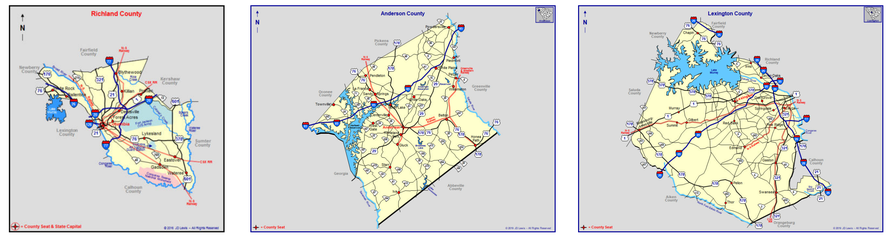
Core Components: Sessions include healthy cooking demonstrations, guided physical activity, diabetes education, stress management, eye and foot care, and spiritual practices that build resilience and motivation.

Supportive Network: Group-based learning fosters accountability, peer encouragement, and shared cultural and faith-based experiences.

Project Timeline

- 2-Year Program (June 2025-May 2027)
- First Phase of Program

Locations



Participant Profile and Baseline Results

Race

	BLEC	Gen 4	All
N	62	45	107
Black	29%	98%	58%
White	10%	2%	7%
Hispanic	58%	0%	34%
Others	3%	0%	2%

HbA1c

	BLEC	Gen 4	All
N	62	45	107
< 5.7	32%	29%	31%
5.7-6.4	42%	36%	**39%**
6.5-8.9	18%	27%	**21%**
>9.0	8%	9%	**8%**

Age

	BLEC	Gen 4	All
N <20	61	43	104
20–39	0%	0%	0%
40–64	11%	12%	12%
65–79	54%	44%	50%
>79	30%	40%	34%
	5%	5%	5%

Areas Interested in Learning

	BLEC	Gen 4	All
N	61	42	103
Being Active	74%	81%	77%
Healthy Coping	61%	55%	58%
Healthy Eating	95%	74%	86%
Monitoring	41%	38%	40%
Problem Solving	48%	40%	45%
Reducing Risk	70%	71%	71%
Taking Medication	30%	38%	33%
What is Diabetes	61%	50%	56%
Other	3%	0%	2%

BMI

	BLEC	Gen 4	All
N	62	45	107
Underweight	0%	4%	2%
Normal	16%	18%	17%
Overweight	24%	22%	23%
Obesity	60%	56%	58%

Community Partners

- **Clemson Rural Health:** Collects labs for pre- and post-program assessments.
- **AnMed Medical Center & Prisma Health:** Support participants without a primary care physician by connecting them to healthcare providers.

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