

Patient Success Profile

Name: Chris Fuchser

Program: Diabetes Management

Referred by: Dr. Anne Draginda

Clinicians: Andrea, Dietitian and
Amber, Nurse

Chris Fuchser grew up in Switzerland. He immigrated to Canada in 1975, living in B.C. then moving to Edmonton in 1988. In November 2011, he was not feeling like himself and went for a blood test. The results indicated high blood sugars. He was diagnosed with diabetes type II.

Since committing to the Diabetes Management program and working with a dietitian, exercise specialist and nurse at the PCN, he has been able to control the disease and stay medication free.

What changes did you make to your life after attending the Diabetes Management program?

I made small changes that made a big difference. During the education sessions at the PCN, I learned how important weight and diet management are when you have diabetes. I grew to be more aware of what I was eating and started to read food labels closely.

I also sit at my job; on the days that I have meetings, I make sure to park as far away as I can from the meeting place, and have increased activity where I can. I lost 20 pounds in six months, and have been able to stay off medication since then.

How did the PCN support you while you learned how to manage diabetes?

In the beginning, I got frustrated with my blood sugar going up and down, and I had my doubts about keeping the disease under control. But the dietitian leading my classes and the other clinicians always reassured me I was on the right track. The integration of the PCN services combined with a family doctor really works. I was not just relying on one doctor to help me. They suggested I see a foot specialist, an eye doctor, and I met with a nurse once a week to figure out what meals were triggering my high blood sugar.

Why was the diabetes management program a good fit for you?

I experienced lots of ups and downs in the beginning. Having the clinicians at the PCN tell me it was not the end of the world was a relief. When your body is not doing its job, it was so great to have this support team I could count on, and I felt lucky to have this resource.

What progress do you feel you have made since participating in the Diabetes Management Program?

I have been able to keep off the weight and keep my blood pressure down. I am a much healthier man in a lot of ways, and much more aware. I know that if I want to live a healthy life, I have to really get involved and act with intent.

Since the course, I have continued to read, research, and listen to people who can share their experience or expertise about diabetes.

What would you share with others who have diabetes and are looking for disease management strategies?

In the first session, we were told to take everything we have heard about diabetes and throw it in the garbage. Every person in the room would experience the effects of the disease differently, and it was up to us to take the information we were given and find out what works for each of us as individuals.

Diabetes is not a disease that will ravage your body; you can change behaviours to make a difference and lead a healthy life.

Your doctor. Your team. Here for your health.

