



Patient Success Profile

Name: Vincenzo Russo

Program: Diabetes Management

Referred by: Dr. Qaiser Rizvi

Clinician: Amanda, Dietitian

Vincenzo Russo moved from Italy to Canada when he was 20 years old, and studied chemistry, physics, mathematics, and French as a second language at the University of Alberta.

Vince's father was diagnosed with diabetes late in life, and at 67, Vince had been keeping a close watch on his own health, monitoring his blood sugar levels every few months. In February 2013, the retired high school teacher got the news. His tests came back indicating his blood sugar was 14 (normal level is 4-8). His doctor diagnosed him with Type II Diabetes.

Since joining the diabetes management program at North Edmonton PCN, Vince has dropped 40 pounds, his blood pressure has decreased, and his exercise regimen averages more than 40,000 steps a day.

What prompted you to take action and seek help for diabetes management at Edmonton North PCN?

My health is everything to me. I enjoy being outside, walking, taking pictures, watching wildlife. When I learned I had diabetes, I asked my doctor, Dr. Qaiser Rizvi, to refer me to the diabetes management program at the PCN.

When did you start the program? What progress have you made?

I started the program at the PCN in early March, joining group classes and information sessions to learn about managing diabetes. I also worked with Amanda Hall, my dietitian, to come up with meal plans that would work for me. I signed up for the Pedometer Challenge and started walking 10,000 steps a day, but always pushed myself to go further. I now walk on average over 40,000 steps. After three months, I have lost weight, stabilized my blood sugar levels and blood pressure, and been able to reduce my medication dosages.

Has the PCN changed your view on your disease?

Every time I am there, I am greeted by Lori's friendly face at reception. Though I am a very driven person, and accomplish what I set out to do, the PCN has provided me with extra stimulus and encouragement to achieve my goals. I know I am not alone in needing support.

How did you get to where you are today?

I always want to do my very best in everything I do, whether it is school, work, managing health, or exercising. I started by committing to 10,000 steps a day, but wanted to see if I could do 12,000, then 14,000, then 20,000. I added more steps every day, and set a goal to complete 2.5 million steps for the pedometer challenge. I ended up with over three million.

What would you share with others who are thinking about joining a program at the PCN?

Never give up. Set small goals and challenge yourself to increase your activity by five minutes a day, or add an extra 500 yards. Re-evaluate your goals at the end of every week and end of every month to measure your successes.

To stay accountable to my dietary and exercise goals, I have a lot of help from extended family, but if you don't have that help, seek support from friends and professionals. The professionals at the PCN empower you with the right information, and offer a supportive, encouraging environment in which to achieve your goals.

Your doctor. Your team. Here for your health.