



Diabetes in Central Oregon: A Community Snapshot

Diabetes is one of the most common health challenges in Central Oregon. Many people are finding ways to manage it every day.

What is diabetes?

Diabetes happens when there is too much sugar in your blood because your body cannot use insulin well. Insulin is a hormone that helps move sugar from your blood into your cells to give you energy. When sugar builds up in the blood, it can cause health problems such as heart disease and vision loss.

Who is this report about?

This report is about adults with diabetes in Central Oregon who are enrolled with PacificSource Community Solutions to get healthcare through the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid). The information comes from their combined health care data from 2024. In this report, we call these adults *members*.

What is a Member?

An adult with in Central Oregon who got care through the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid) with PacificSource Community Solutions.

How do we talk about diabetes in this report?

In this report, we describe diabetes in two ways:

What does A1C Mean for You?

A1C below 9%?

- Well-managed diabetes
- Lower chance of health problems

A1C above 9%?

- Harder-to-manage diabetes
- Higher chance of health problems

- **Well-managed diabetes** means a blood test called A1C (HbA1C) is below 9%. This test shows your average blood sugar over the past few months. Keeping it below 9% lowers the risk of health problems.
- **Harder-to-manage diabetes** means an A1C over 9%, or the member didn't have an A1C test in 2024. This means blood sugar may not be in a healthy range right now and the member may need more support.

Why do we look at this information?

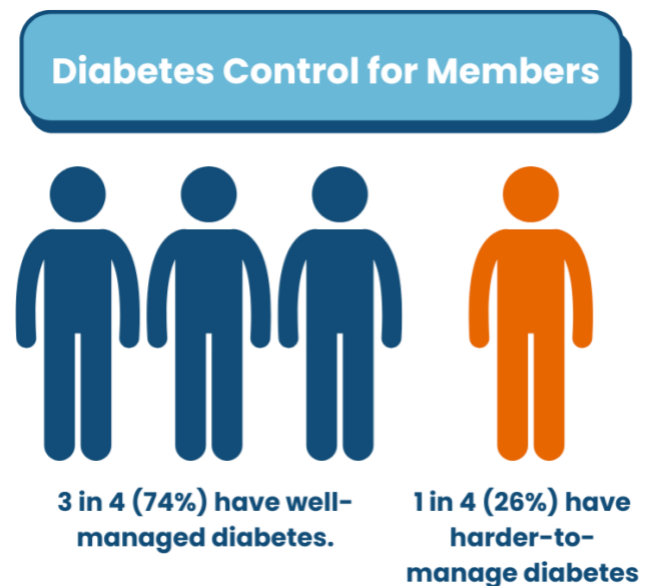
We look at diabetes management by demographics. This helps us see where experiences are different and where more support can improve health for everyone in the region.

Overall Findings

- About 3 out of 4 members (74%) have well-managed diabetes, meaning their blood sugar is in a healthy range.
- About 1 out of 4 members (26%) have harder-to-manage diabetes, meaning their blood sugar is not in a healthy range.

What this means: Most members are doing well with their diabetes. But some groups in Central Oregon are having a harder time. This shows where more or different support could help people keep their blood sugar in a healthy range and lower the risk of health problems.

In our community: Managing diabetes is not just about medicine or checking blood sugar. Access to healthy food, safe places to exercise, transportation, and affordable doctor visits can make a big difference. Support from family, friends, and the community also helps people stay on track with healthy eating, activity, and medical care.



Central Oregon offers many resources to support health and well-being. Free and low-cost programs teach skills for eating well, staying active, and managing stress. Local organizations help people get fresh, healthy foods. Clinics provide support by arranging rides, offering interpreters, and connecting people to needed services. Together, these efforts build a stronger support system and make it easier for people with diabetes to care for their health.

Diabetes Control by Age

- Younger members (ages 18–45): About 3 out of 4 (75–78%) have well-managed diabetes.
- Older members (65 and older): About 7 out of 10 (69.5%) have harder-to-manage diabetes.

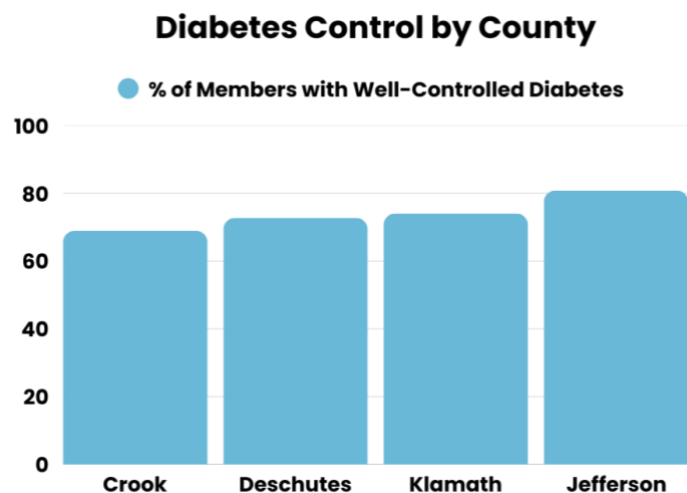
What this means: Younger members are more likely to be managing their diabetes well. Older members are more likely to have diabetes that is harder to manage. Older adults may face more challenges and could benefit from added support.

In our community: One regional organization helps older adults stay safe, nourished, healthy, and connected. They provide nutritious meals and host community dining sites where people can share food and conversation. They also connect older adults and caregivers to resources for housing, transportation, nutrition, and home safety. In partnership with local organizations, they offer free classes and activities such as *Living Well with Diabetes*, tai chi, and *Better Bones and Balance*. Through these programs, older adults, including those living with diabetes, can eat well, stay active, and take care of their health.

Diabetes Control by County

Rates of well-managed diabetes in Central Oregon range from the high 60s to just over 80%.

- In Jefferson County, about 8 in 10 members (81%) have well-managed diabetes.
- Rates in other counties are closer to 7 in 10 members (70%) with well-managed diabetes.



What this means: Well-managed diabetes is not the same for members in every county. These differences show where more support is needed to improve health in each county.

In our community: In Jefferson County, people are improving diabetes outcomes by working together. Local programs offer cooking classes, grocery store demonstrations, and fun challenges that make healthy eating and physical activity easier for everyone. Classes are designed to include familiar foods, family traditions, and support in more than one language. Health workers, such as dietitians, also join these activities so people can ask questions and get advice from caregivers they know. By keeping programs local, welcoming, and culturally relevant, community members feel supported to make changes that fit their lives and health goals.

Diabetes Control by Race and Ethnicity

Well-Managed Diabetes

- Blood sugar is in a healthy range

Harder-to-Manage Diabetes

- Blood sugar is not in a healthy range

- Members who identified as American Indian or Latino/a/x were more likely to have well-managed diabetes, about 8 to 9 in 10 (83–87%).
- Members who identified as White were more likely to have harder-to-manage diabetes, about 7 in 10 (69%).

Smaller groups of members, such as Black, Asian, and other races, also had harder-to-manage diabetes, but there were too few members to show clear patterns.

What this means: Diabetes outcomes are different across racial and ethnic groups. Some communities are more likely to have well-managed diabetes, which gives us opportunities to learn from their strengths. Others are experiencing harder-to-manage diabetes, which shows where added support could be helpful.

In our community: Diabetes care works best when it matches people's culture, language, and daily life. For some families, this means services in preferred languages, familiar foods and traditions, and support from trusted community health workers. For others, it can mean easier access in remote areas, practical tips that fit with work and routines, peer support, and activities that feel familiar. Across all groups, care works best when it is culturally welcoming, easy to understand, and involves trusted community partners.

Diabetes Control and Disability

- Members who reported that they had a disability were more likely to have harder-to-manage diabetes, about 7 in 10 (70%).
- Members with no disability were more likely to have well-managed diabetes, about 3 in 4 (75%).

What this means: Some members with disabilities have diabetes that is harder to manage. Living with a disability can bring extra challenges, like getting to appointments or managing daily routines. More support and resources might help these members keep their diabetes well-managed.

In our community: Some people with disabilities in Central Oregon get help from supported living agencies to live at home and stay active. For those with diabetes, these agencies can bring together a team, such as a dietitian, diabetes educator, activity specialist, and support staff, to make a plan that fits the person's needs. Staff may use simple language, adapt activities, or help with healthy food choices and safe ways to be active. With steady support, people can build healthy habits and keep blood sugar in a safe range.

Diabetes Control by Gender Identity

- There were no significant differences in diabetes control between men and women.
- Data for gender-diverse populations was too small to draw strong conclusions.

What this means: Well-managed diabetes looks about the same for men and women. We need more information to better understand the experiences of gender-diverse members. In the future, more data could help us learn how to support all members better.

In our community: Gender identity can affect health in many ways, but we don't yet have enough local information to understand how it relates to diabetes control. Local clinics and partners are working to make care welcoming for people of all gender identities. By listening to people's experiences and gathering better data, we can find new ways to support every member with diabetes.

Summary: What We Learned

- Most members in Central Oregon are managing their diabetes well.
- Not everyone has the same options to help them manage their diabetes well. Things like location, age, disability, and access to health information can make it easier or harder for people to keep their diabetes well controlled.
- Community programs and local support are an important part of helping members manage their diabetes.

More likely to have well-controlled diabetes

- ▶ **Younger members**
- ▶ **Jefferson County members**
- ▶ **American Indian or Latino/a/x members**
- ▶ **Members without a disability**

More likely to have harder-to-control diabetes

- ▶ **Older members**
- ▶ **Members outside Jefferson County**
- ▶ **Members who are White**
- ▶ **Members with a disability**

About 3 out of 4 Central Oregon members have well-managed diabetes. At the same time, some groups face more challenges. This information helps us see where extra support could make a difference so that everyone has the same chance to live their healthiest life in Central Oregon. Improving diabetes outcomes takes working together. We invite community members, health workers, schools, clinics, and local organizations to join us.

What Can You Do?

Most people in Central Oregon are managing their diabetes well. Together, we can make sure all our neighbors have the same opportunities to be healthy. Here are ways you can get involved.

1. **Share your story.** Join future community conversations about diabetes. Complete this form to be invited: <https://forms.gle/e4biKrrmqSvSH1mv7>.
2. **Connect with your community.** If you work with people or groups in this report, think about how you can support their health—for example, by sharing information, connecting them to services, or listening to their experiences.
3. **Start a conversation.** Talk with family, friends, or neighbors about diabetes and health. Sharing support and ideas can make a difference.
4. **Continue to learn.** Explore more about the health of our communities at the Central Oregon Health Data website: centraloregonhealthdata.org.

Thank you to the community members, health workers, and partners who shared their time and knowledge for this report. Your support helps us learn and work toward better health for everyone in Central Oregon.

