

# Success seen with mini-group visits for patients with diabetes

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(HealthDay)—Mini-group visits yield good results among patients with diabetes, according to a report published by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Devin Sawyer, M.D., director of the Providence St. Peter Family Medicine residency program in Olympia, Wash., describes his experience with mini-[group visits](#) among [patients](#) with diabetes. Based on the idea that patients with [diabetes](#) could benefit from meeting others with the same diagnosis, Sawyer established mini groups of patients; he found three patients to be the most successful. A designated medical assistant is involved in doing the preparatory work for these visits, including scheduling lab work ahead of time.

Sawyer reports having seen success using mini-group visits, which do not replace the patients' regular office visits, but rather augment them. The group visits work best when the same patients meet for group visits every three to four months. Other groups of patients can also benefit from group visits, including those who are trying to quit smoking and pregnant teenagers. The two biggest barriers to these group visits are "productivity widgets" and the payment system.

"Part of the frustration of primary care is the concept of noncompliant patients," Sawyer said in a statement. "And really, it's our own fault. We have plugged patients into these 15-minute time slots, tell them what to do, and then wonder why they didn't do it. Instead, we need to use motivational techniques to get them engaged and ready to participate."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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