



Alivio Medical Center
An Active Presence for a Strong Community

engagement, and patient-centered care for diabetes management. **Alivio Medical Center (Alivio) in Chicago, Illinois** is a key partner in the implementation of this project. [Here](#) you can learn more about this project and other key partners.



Alivio Medical Center is a bilingual and bicultural organization with over 20 years of experience devoted to providing access to quality, comprehensive, and affordable health care to the Hispanic community. Under the leadership of **Carmen Velásquez, Executive Director**, Alivio was founded to meet the need for a community-based health center, responsive and culturally sensitive to many of Chicago's most undeserved and vulnerable communities. Today, Alivio serves uninsured and underinsured families and individuals who have historically not accessed healthcare due to language and cultural barriers, intimidation of traditional healthcare institutions, little awareness of available resources and fear of immigration status. Consequently, health promotion, health education and prevention are integral parts of Alivio's comprehensive programs. Alivio is a Federally Qualified Health Center and its bilingual providers serve all patients regardless of ability to pay. Recognizing the value of the diverse cultures and races, the staff contribute to improving community members' health through the provision of medical services and implementation of activities of advocacy, education, research, and evaluation, provided in an environment of caring and respect.

A unique aspect of Alivio, which makes them a perfect partner for this project, is their active presence in the community through their advocacy and outreach program **Compañeros en Salud**. *Compañeros* are health promoters who serve as liaisons between the community and health, human and social service organizations. The aim of *Compañeros* is to improve the quality of life of individuals and their families, and to lower their risk of developing diabetes and other chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity and/or its complications. In this project, *Compañeros* will be part of the practice-based care team including physicians, certified diabetes educators and a registered dietician. *Compañeros* will work closely with patients and their families to encourage and facilitate access to regular clinical care, deliver diabetes education, assist patients with implementation of diabetes care plans, provide regular and ongoing follow up and support for diabetes management issues, and link patients to needed community resources.





*Peers for Progress
Project Partner Spotlight*

By establishing linkages between strong community resources and high quality primary care already in place at Alivio, this project hopes to engage, over two years, up to 4,000 low-income Latino adults with diabetes to receive regular clinical care and improve their self-management behaviors (e.g., medicine adherence, physical activity, healthy diet, non-smoking, etc.), clinical indicators (e.g., HbA1c, blood pressure, BMI, etc.) and quality of life.

For more information about Alivio Medical Center, please visit <http://www.aliviomedicalcenter.org/> or contact Juana Ballesteros, BSN, RN, MPH. (jballesteros@aliviomedicalcenter.org)

The Peers for Progress BMSF project is at the planning stage and will soon kick off implementation of the project. Stay tuned for more updates on the project. For information, please contact the Program Manager for the project, Diana M. Urlaub, MPH. (diana_urlaub@med.unc.edu)