

Brief description of current projects

- Advancing diabetes prevention in Wyoming: During Dr. Thomas's sabbatical (spring 2021), she established connections with the Wyoming Department of Health Chronic Disease Prevention Program and Wyoming Center on Aging (WyCOA). Our team conducted a Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) on campus and in the community. Two Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students conducted their final DNP projects in these programs. Long-term goals of this relationship are to facilitate the establishment and maintenance of Diabetes Prevention Programs in Wyoming.
- Health-related self-concept in the context of lifestyle change and type 2 diabetes prevention: This project was funded by the College of Health Sciences Seed Grant program and the Mountain West CTR-IN mini-grant program. A measure of health-related self-concept in the context of lifestyle change was created (publication) and tested in a type 2 diabetes prevention intervention at East Carolina University (manuscript in review). A follow-up project regarding understanding of lifestyle health-related self-concept (Lifestyle-HRSC) in relation to diabetes prevention intervention participation is in development.
- Diabetes prevention program implementation by health professional students: This project was funded by the Sharron S. Humenick Nursing Enrichment Fund in the Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing. We pilot tested a diabetes prevention intervention facilitation training program for pre-health professional students (publication). We conducted focus groups with at-risk individuals in rural areas to understand the acceptance and feasibility of student-led prevention programs (manuscript in development).
- Perceptions of risk for developing type 2 diabetes: Our project involved qualitative interviews with at-risk individuals and health care providers about the meaning of risk. We presented data from this project on several occasions. We continue to consider research projects related to this topic!
- Meaning of the term "Prediabetes": The students on our research team received a seed grant from the College of Health Sciences to further understand health professionals' use of the term "prediabetes". We created a survey, collected data, and presented the results. A manuscript is currently in review.
- Diabetes in Merida, Yucatan, Mexico: Dr. Thomas established research collaborations with nursing faculty at Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan (UADY). The overall goals are to understand the cultural factors in Yucatan, Mexico that may affect diabetes prevention and management in that region. Research project development, data analysis, and manuscript preparation are ongoing.
- Perceptions of nurses and Native Americans in relation to the nurse-client relationship: This project was funded by the Sharron S. Humenick Nursing Enrichment Fund in the Fay W. Whitney School of Nursing and the Wyoming INBRE Community College Collaborative Grant Program. We conducted qualitative interviews to examine nursing care and cultural competency from the perspectives of both nurses (publication) and Native American individuals (publication). Dr. Thomas continues to engage with other researchers and faculty with interest in Native American health.
- See the "Publications" and "Presentations" heading for details about dissemination of the above projects.