



# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

## ***A New Life***

### **VETERAN ROBERT PULEO DISCUSSES HOW THE TELEMOVE! PROGRAM HELPED HIM SET AND MEET 3 HEALTH GOALS AND LOSE OVER 46 POUNDS**

"I've struggled with weight problems for as long as I can remember. I've tried big-name programs, but they didn't help me. Finally in March 2015, my weight reached an all-time high of 227 pounds! I knew I had to do something before the excess weight created more health problems for me.

In December 2015, my VA primary care provider at the VA Boston Healthcare system, Dr. Sullivan, talked to me about my high A1C level—10%. She told me what I needed to do to control my diabetes, then told me about the different weight management options offered by VA.

I opted to do the TeleMOVE! Program because I needed to do things on my own. When I enrolled, I was given a scale and a home messaging device that would send my daily results to my TeleMOVE! nurse, Lisa Gould. Lisa taught me how to eat a more balanced diet, and helped me become more aware of amount of food I was eating. I also started to learn to eat more slowly. Additionally, I worked with VA dietitian Christine Reid, who helped me set 3 goals that I wanted to achieve.

My health goals were to 1) lose 1-2 pounds a week, 2) get my A1C under 9%, and 3) reduce my blood press to less than 140 over 90.

With the help and guidance of TeleMOVE!, I slowly began to change how I ate. For years, I used to eat big breakfasts—eggs, bacon, home fries, and toast or donuts. Then for lunch, I'd go to fast food restaurants for a couple of burgers and fries, or to the sub shop for a large sub sandwich. I'd also eat junk food between meals.

Through the program, I began to eat less carbohydrates, more fruits and vegetables, and more lean meats. Now, I am also conscious of foods high in sodium, fat, and cholesterol—I'm trying to eat less of those foods. I mostly drink water, but I do have coffee in the morning, and occasionally, half a can of diet soda.

The education and support I got from my TeleMOVE! nurse and dietitian were invaluable. They guided me along the way and it was good to know they were only a phone call away.

At times during the program, I became frustrated that the weight was coming off slower as I got close to my goal weight of 185 pounds. But my TeleMOVE! nurse often reminded me that each week I was losing weight and heading in the right direction to achieve my goals.

My level of physical activity has really changed, too. Back when I weighed 227 pounds, the only active thing I did was playing golf one day a week. But as soon as I'd come home from the course, I'd have to take medicine for back pain.

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**– Robert Puleo**

Today, I go to the gym 5 or 6 days a week. I ride the stationary bike, walk on the treadmill, and do some stretching. Because I don't have any more back pain, I can now go golfing without having to take any pain pills.

Losing 46.5 pounds through TeleMOVE! has changed my life! I surpassed my weight goal, and I now weigh 180.5. My waist went from 40 inches down to 36 inches, so I had to have my clothes tailored. My A1C level is now down to 6, my insulin dose is lower, and my blood pressure has also improved.

My advice to other Veterans who need to lose weight is to talk to your doctor. Ask him or her about getting involved in one of VA's weight management program options.

TeleMOVE! changed my life and it can change yours, too!”