Employer Guide

Working together to lower costs and improve quality measures.
In diabetes care today, there is a huge opportunity to improve outcomes and to bridge the gap between the clinical and self-management aspects of care. We saw an opportunity to create a world where people at risk of and affected by diabetes and related cardiometabolic conditions can live better, richer, longer lives—and we hope you’ll join us.

Our repositioning, renaming and rebranding benefit not only our members, people with diabetes and our organization, but also you, our members’ employers. In fact, the extensive research we conducted over the past year included valuable input from employers like you. This data led us to make evidence-based decisions that include the new direction you see today.

We know that while self-management care and education is at the heart of what diabetes care and education specialists do, it isn’t all that they do. Clinical management is a key part of the role, as is integrating all elements of care. The new title, diabetes care and education specialist, better demonstrates the value we bring as members of the care team—and how we help provide optimal care, lower costs, improved outcomes, productivity and performance.

As we transition from the American Association of Diabetes Educators to the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists, we are working to create optimal outcomes. As you may already know,
Diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. 30.3 million Americans have diabetes. That’s 9.4% of the population. Diabetes and its complications have a substantial impact on healthcare costs.

The work of diabetes care and education specialists is proven to reduce overall healthcare expenditures. Diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES), also called diabetes education, is facilitated by diabetes care and education specialists. DSMES improves performance measures, provides optimal care at a lower cost and elevates outcomes and health.

Critical members of the care team, diabetes care and education specialists do more than educate. They support a holistic, team-based approach to diabetes, prediabetes and cardiometabolic care through individualized management that addresses the physical and behavioral health of an individual. They work with the individual to create a plan of care that takes into account an individual’s background, culture, environment, access to resources and belief system.

Please join us in creating an environment that allows the entire care team to come together as a community of collaborators, advisors and supporters to create a world where thriving is a way of life. With an all-in approach that fuels forward thinking and creates exponential value, we look forward to helping you improve the lives of the people at risk of and affected by diabetes and other related cardiometabolic conditions while reducing costs and improving important quality measures and outcomes.

In 2017, the estimated cost of diagnosed diabetes was $327 billion, including $237 billion in direct medical costs and $90 billion in reduced productivity. The average medical expenditure for people with diabetes is $13,700 a year. This accounts for 1 in 4 health care dollars.

The four main ways a diabetes care and education specialist can help you:

**Optimal care for people with diabetes, prediabetes and cardiometabolic conditions**

**Lower costs**

**Improved quality measures, outcomes and health**

**Improved productivity and performance**
Optimal care for people with diabetes, prediabetes and cardiometabolic conditions

• Diabetes care and education specialists are able to spend time with individuals, counseling them on how to incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their lives, helping them understand how their medications work, teaching them how to monitor and interpret their blood glucose results to minimize complications and giving them the tools for problem solving and dealing with diabetes distress.

• Through lifestyle change, led by a diabetes care and education specialist who supports the emotional well-being of the whole person, individuals are able to improve their overall quality of life and see real, improved clinical outcomes.

• Diabetes care and education specialists integrate the clinical and self-management aspects of care. They demonstrate expertise in the full range of cardiometabolic conditions.

• Technology experts, diabetes care and education specialists are equipped to support an individual’s changing needs, and use their data to guide care.

• Diabetes care and education specialists train and support other members of the health care workforce to increase the likelihood that quality measures are met and health outcomes are improved.

Lower costs

• Diabetes care and education specialists offer care that positively impacts quality and cost for the person with diabetes, the provider and the healthcare system.

• DSMES is a cost-effective tool to help improve behaviors and outcomes for people with diabetes. Studies have shown that DSMES reduces medical costs and improves outcomes for people with diabetes.

i. A Harvard study shows DSMES saves an estimated $1,309 over three years for every Medicare Advantage beneficiary who completes an education program.

ii. Three-year retroactive claims analysis of 4 million covered lives, including 250,000 Medicare beneficiaries, showed an average Medicare cost savings per month/per person of $135 for those beneficiaries who complete DSMES. Cost savings for inpatient hospital costs was as much as $160 per person/ per month.

iii. Medicare and many private insurance providers cover 10 hours of DSMES during the 12 consecutive months after starting diabetes education, and two hours a calendar year thereafter.

Improved quality measures, outcomes and health

• A randomized control trial adds to the growing evidence that the education and support provided by DSMES programs leads to lower A1c levels and adoption of healthy behaviors. Participants in The Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation-funded study saw an A1c reduction of nearly 2%.

• Additional research has shown that a 1 percent decrease in A1c levels leads to a 37 percent decrease in microvascular complications, and a 21 percent decrease in diabetes-related complications and death.
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC27454/

• As essential members of the diabetes care team, diabetes care and education specialists help individuals self-manage their disease to achieve behavior change goals that lead to better clinical outcomes and improved health status.

• Studies confirm DSMES improves clinical outcomes as well as client satisfaction.

Improved productivity and performance

• Diabetes care and education specialists are an integral part of the entire care team. Their work with individuals reduces their risk of developing costly complications.

• Diabetes care and education specialists ease the workload of providers who do not have the time to spend with their clients.

• The diabetes care and education specialist’s contribution to quality improvement work provides tremendous value in helping organizations achieve performance measures. By coordinating all aspects of care and self-management provided by all disciplines, they improve the productivity and performance of the team.

• Workforce leveraging: Diabetes care and education specialists train other team members to provide quality diabetes care at every interaction as part of team-based care.

• Studies confirm DSMES improves performance measures. Participation in DSMES services is independently associated with a lower frequency of all-cause hospital readmission within 30 days. Healy SJ, Black D, Harris C, Lorenz A, Dungan KM. Inpatient Diabetes Education Is Associated With Less Frequent Hospital Readmission Among Patients With Poor Glycemic Control. Diabetes Care Oct 2013, 36 (10) 29602967; DOI: 10.2337/dc130108
Additional Resources

Research on the value of diabetes care and education specialists and DSMES in improving clinical, financial, utilization, behavioral and satisfaction outcomes:
DiabetesEducator.org/ValueDE

Information on referring people with diabetes to DSMES programs:
DiabetesEducator.org/ReferDSMES

Information about the Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE)® credential:
NCBDE.org

Information about Board Certification in Advanced Diabetes Management (BC-ADM):
DiabetesEducator.org/BCADM

ADCES Vision for the Specialty:
DiabetesEducator.org/Vision