How do I become a diabetes educator?

One must be a healthcare professional who has a defined role as a diabetes educator, not for those who may perform some diabetes related functions as part of or in the course of other usual and customary duties.

Practice as a diabetes educator means actively employed for compensation, providing a direct or indirect professional contribution to the care and self-management education of people with diabetes.

Diabetes education, also referred to as diabetes self-management education or diabetes self-management training, is performed by health care professionals who have appropriate credentials and experience consistent with the particular profession's scope of practice. Diabetes self-management education is defined as the interactive, collaborative, ongoing process involving the person with diabetes or pre-diabetes and/or the caregivers and the educator(s). The process includes:

- Assessment of the individual's specific education needs
- Identification of the individual's specific diabetes self-management goals
- Education and behavioral intervention directed toward helping the individual achieve identified self-management goals
- Evaluation(s) of the individual's attainment of identified self-management goals
- Proper documentation of all education encounters

Diabetes educators can be found in a variety of settings: hospitals, physician offices, clinics, home health, wellness programs, to name a few. They most often work within accredited or recognized diabetes education programs. This means that the diabetes education program has met requirements set forth by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and can bill for diabetes self-management training through two different codes: G0108 and G0109, which are for individual and group diabetes education.

View practice documents related to diabetes education.

After working in the field for a while, many diabetes educators choose to pursue the Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) credential. See below for information on becoming a CDE.

AADE resources for people interested in learning the basics of diabetes education:

Career Path Program, Levels 1 and 2
ABCs of Diabetes Education

How do I become a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE)?

In order to become a CDE one must first meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (NCBDE). Please note: The CDE credential is fully administered and maintained by NCBDE. AADE does not have a role in the process, but does have products that assist in preparing for the CDE exam.
NCBDE has set two eligibility requirements:
1) Eligible healthcare professional; i.e. nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, occupational or physical therapist, etc.
2) Professional practice experience with a minimum of 1,000 hours of diabetes self-management education experience, with 40% of those hours accrued in the most recent year preceding application.

Please note: This is only a summary of requirements. Additional information can be found on the NCBDE website: [www.ncbde.org](http://www.ncbde.org).

Professional practice experience is defined as employment for compensation as a diabetes educator within the past four years.

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- Assessment of the individual's specific education needs
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If the two requirements are met then the next step would be to take the national certification examination. Upon receiving a passing score the certification credential of CDE would be granted.

For detailed eligibility requirements and examination information including application contact NCBDE at [www.ncbde.org](http://www.ncbde.org).

AADE resources to help you prepare for the CDE exam:

Courses:
- [Core Concepts Course – Live](http://www.ncbde.org)
- [Core Concepts Course - Online](http://www.ncbde.org)

Books
- [The Art & Science of Diabetes Self-Management Education Desk Reference](http://www.ncbde.org)
- [The Diabetes Education Review Guide](http://www.ncbde.org)
- [Quick Guide to Medications](http://www.ncbde.org)