

Keeping Your DSMES Program Sustainable

7 WAYS TO PROVE THE VALUE OF YOUR DIABETES PROGRAM

If you want to keep your DSMES program sustainable, you must educate administrators about the global effect of diabetes education on patient volume. Here are Kihm's 7 pieces of hard-won advice for proving the value of your program to your administration.

1. Keep administration up to date at all times! Ask yourself what you can do to make yourself visible and accountable to the administrator. And then do it, and do it often.
2. Be proactive. Don't wait until you're under the microscope to start gathering your data.
3. Dollars and cents make a difference, so do the math. Look at the full picture of the impact your program has on your organization's bottom line. Get a number value on your worth. If the patient does everything that they should do—lab services, PCP visits, hospital wellness center memberships, follow-ups, and so on, how much are you contributing to the global revenue?
4. Be your own advocate. Come up with a plan to offset your costs. Apply for grants, organize a Walk for Diabetes to raise money, and so on.
5. Use your patients. Have your patients complete a questionnaire and tell your administrators how important you—as educator—are to them and their health. Be sure you do a satisfaction survey and share the results with your administration.
6. Get yourself out there and bring in new patients. Talk about your program. Advertise the hospital and talk about what is going on. Get a spot on the radio, write articles for local papers, and do outreach in your community. Make the community aware of who you are and raise awareness for your employer.
7. Ask about care coordination. It fits in with what diabetes educators already do. If it might save your job, then speak up.