



## DIABETES EDUCATORS: SUPPORTING YOU, EMPOWERING YOUR PATIENTS

As the number of people with diabetes increases, the demands on your time and practice will continue to escalate. Help your patients achieve better metabolic control, improve lipid levels, reduce blood pressure, develop self-management skills and meet follow-up care guidelines by partnering with a diabetes educator.

### WHAT IS A DIABETES EDUCATOR?

Diabetes educators are licensed health care professionals—registered nurses, registered dietitians and pharmacists, among others—who specialize in helping people with diabetes learn how to manage their condition. The counseling and support that diabetes educators provide is known as diabetes education or diabetes self-management training (DSMT). Many of the healthcare professionals who provide these services also carry the designation Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE).

Diabetes educators have a unique skill set and serve as essential support for patients and providers. Diabetes educators can:

- **Increase your practice's efficiency** by assuming time-consuming patient training, counseling and follow-up duties
- **Help you meet pay-for-performance** and quality improvement goals
- **Track and monitor patients' care** and progress and provide you with status reports
- **Help delay the onset of diabetes** with prevention and self-management training for your patients who are at high risk

**Consider contracting with, employing or referring your patients to a diabetes educator.**



## HOW CAN DIABETES EDUCATORS HELP YOUR PATIENTS?

While you manage your patients' care, diabetes educators focus on empowering them to manage their diabetes. They teach, coach and guide patients so they understand their diabetes in the context of their personal lives and work with them to set—and meet—behavior change goals to improve their health.

Diabetes educators help people with diabetes:

- **Learn** basic information about diabetes and its management
- **Understand** how to use diabetes devices, such as blood glucose meters, insulin pens, insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors
- **Adopt** healthy eating habits through nutrition education, including diabetes meal-planning, weight-loss strategies, and other disease-specific nutrition counseling
- **Develop** problem-solving strategies and skills to self-manage diabetes
- **Monitor** blood glucose, and learn how to interpret and appropriately respond to the results
- **Understand** how their medications work, including their action, side effects, efficacy, toxicity, prescribed dosage, and more
- **Develop** skills for handling stressful situations

## THE BENEFITS OF DIABETES EDUCATION

Fewer than 60 percent of people with diabetes have had formal diabetes education. Healthy People 2020 has made increasing that number a priority, because research shows people who receive diabetes education are more likely to:

- Use primary care and preventative services
- Take medications as prescribed
- Control their glucose, blood pressure and LDL cholesterol
- Have lower health costs

Diabetes Self-Management Training is a covered benefit by Medicare and most health plans when provided by a diabetes educator and within an accredited program.

## WHERE CAN YOU FIND A DIABETES EDUCATOR?

Diabetes educators work in a variety of practice settings, including hospital inpatient and outpatient departments, clinics, public health departments and physician practices. Some have their own private practice and others contract with one or more providers to offer diabetes education to patients in multiple practices. Most diabetes educators work within a program that has been accredited by either the American Association of Diabetes Educators or the American Diabetes Association.

**Start the process by making a referral to a local diabetes educator. To find a diabetes educator in your community, visit [www.diabeteseducator.org/find](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/find).**

## EMPOWER YOUR PATIENTS

to manage their condition by referring them to a diabetes educator, and then follow up to encourage them to continue their education. Your patients can find out more about what diabetes educators do at

[www.diabeteseducator.org](http://www.diabeteseducator.org).

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Phone:

Email: