



DIABETES  
EDUCATORS  
& YOUR  
PRACTICE

*Partnering for Better Health,  
Better Outcomes and Better Lives*



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 adding a diabetes educator to your team.

SUSAN CORNELL, PharmD, CDE, FAPHA, FADE

## WHAT IS A DIABETES EDUCATOR?

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

## WHAT CAN DIABETES EDUCATORS DO FOR YOUR PRACTICE?

Diabetes educators have a unique skill set and can serve as critical support in primary care. 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 you manage your patients' metabolic control, lipid levels and blood pressure through medication management and physician-directed protocols.
- ✓ Help delay the onset of diabetes with prevention and self-management training for your patients who are at high risk.

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

“No diabetes management tool—no new oral agent, insulin or medical device—is as important as the services of a certified diabetes educator.”

CHRISTOPHER SAUDEK, MD

Director of Johns Hopkins Diabetes Center, Baltimore, MD

## WAYS YOU CAN WORK WITH A DIABETES EDUCATOR

### Contract with an independent diabetes educator

Independent diabetes educators are licensed healthcare professionals who can bill for their services or who partner with another professional who has a provider number. These educators may contract with one or more physicians to offer diabetes education to patients from multiple practices.

### Directly employ a diabetes educator in your practice

Add a diabetes educator to your staff to provide diabetes care and education to patients in your practice. The services provided by a diabetes educator can often be billed incident to a physician, making reimbursement possible.



EDIE PIGNOTTI, RN, BSN, CDE

“When physicians and diabetes educators work as a team, patients improve their A1Cs, lose weight and gain control over their diabetes. Together, we improve the lives of patients with diabetes.”

EDIE PIGNOTTI, RN, BSN, CDE  
DuPage Medical Group, Naperville, IL

### **Refer your patients to an outpatient diabetes education program**

There are a variety of accredited diabetes education programs that offer services in community-based settings, such as hospitals, clinics and pharmacies. As the overseeing physician, you can refer patients to diabetes education services.

A referral form can be found at [www.diabeteseducator.org/physicians](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/physicians).

### **Become an accredited diabetes education program**

Reimbursement for diabetes education is often dependent upon it being offered through an accredited program. AADE's Diabetes Education Accreditation Program allows physicians to implement their own diabetes education program by contracting with an independent diabetes educator or directly employing an educator.

Additional information and the program accreditation application are available at [www.diabeteseducator.org/accreditation](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/accreditation).



PATRICIA SPEIRS, RD, MS, CDE

## HOW CAN DIABETES EDUCATORS HELP MY PATIENTS?

Diabetes educators collaborate with physicians to help empower patients to modify lifestyle and adopt healthy self-care behaviors. Diabetes education may include, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Presenting basic information about diabetes and its management.
- ✓ Training patients and caregivers to use diabetes devices, such as blood glucose meters, insulin pens, insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors.
- ✓ Teaching patients problem-solving strategies and skills to self-manage their diabetes.
- ✓ Motivating patients to set and achieve behavior-change goals.
- ✓ Providing nutrition education including diabetes meal-planning, weight loss strategies and other disease-specific nutrition counseling.
- ✓ Managing medications, based on physician-directed protocols.
- ✓ Educating patients on techniques for risk reduction of acute and chronic complications.
- ✓ Helping patients develop emotional coping skills.

## **PARTNER WITH AN EDUCATOR TODAY!**

Start the process and help to empower your diabetes patients 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) or call 1-800-TEAMUP4.

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

Additional resources are available on the AADE website.

For accreditation, visit [www.diabeteseducator.org/accreditation](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/accreditation).

For a referral form and reimbursement tips, check out [www.diabeteseducator.org/physicians](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/physicians).

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### **ABOUT THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF DIABETES EDUCATORS**

AADE is a multidisciplinary, professional association dedicated to providing diabetes educators with the tools, training and support necessary to help patients change their behavior and accomplish their diabetes self-management goals.