

Module I-1

The role of the diabetes educator

Overview

Diabetes educators are an integral part of the diabetes management team. The role of the educator is to enable people with diabetes to manage their diabetes-related health to the best of their ability, to allow them to make choices and take actions based on informed judgment, and to enhance the quality of life of the person with diabetes. While diabetes educators may come from a variety of health professions, each member of the diabetes team is expected to integrate the educator role into their professional practice. This means that some skills will be common to all team members. Refer to [Module I-2, Team management](#).

Goals

To understand that educators are a part of a team, which includes the person with diabetes at its centre, and that their role is to work with other team members to improve people's self-care ability, health and quality of life

Objectives

After completing this module the participant will be able to:

- Describe the role of diabetes educators in their particular settings
- Discuss the educator role in the professional practice of each team member
- Discuss the expanding clinical role, as well as the advanced practice role, of diabetes educators
- Describe the mentorship role and its importance in the development of new educators
- Differentiate between the roles and contribution of a professional diabetes educator and a non-medical educator
- Discuss the importance of continuous professional and self-development and methods of updating skills and knowledge in the field
- Discuss methods of collaboration with the interdisciplinary healthcare team
- Discuss how to become a diabetes educator
- Discuss the issue of recognition or certification of diabetes educators as it applies in their country

Teaching strategies	Discussion with experienced diabetes educators Writing a reflective paper on becoming a diabetes educator
Suggested time	1 hour
Who should teach this module	Diabetes educators from different professions, such as a nurse, dietitian or pharmacist
References	<p>American Association of Diabetes Educators Task Force. The scope of practice, Standards of practice, and Standards of professional performance for diabetes educators. <i>Diabetes Educ</i> 2005; 31: 487-511.</p> <p>Barlow S, Crean J, Heizler A, et al. Diabetes educator: assessment of evolving practice. <i>Diabetes Educ</i> 2005; 31: 359-72.</p> <p>Diabetes Educators Section Task Force. <i>Standards for diabetes education in Canada</i>. Canadian Diabetes Association. Toronto, 2005.</p> <p>Funnell MM, Brown TL, Childs BP, et al. National standards for diabetes self-management education. <i>Diabetes Care</i> 2008; 31 (Suppl 1): S97-S104.</p> <p>Norris SL, Chowdhury FM, Van Le K, et al. Effectiveness of community health workers in the care of persons with diabetes. <i>Diabet Med</i> 2006; 23: 544-56.</p> <p>Philis-Tsimikas A, Walker C, Rivard L, et al. Improvement of diabetes care of underinsured patients enrolled in Project Dulce: a community-based, culturally appropriate, nurse case management and peer education diabetes care model. <i>Diabetes Care</i> 2004; 27: 110-5.</p> <p>Soundarya M, Asha A, Mohan V. Role of a diabetes educator in the management of diabetes. <i>International Journal of Diabetes in Developing Countries</i> 2004; 24: 65-8.</p>

Detailed content for this module is available as a slide presentation at www.idf.org