



Making the Case to the Patient for DSMES

Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES) helps patients better understand and manage their diabetes. Some patients do not think DSMES is necessary, but Diabetes Care and Education Specialists can share supporting information with patients to help them understand the importance of DSMES.

Key Talking Points Regarding DSMES

Depending on the response from the patient when declining education, the following talking points may be useful to assist a patient in understanding the benefits of DSMES. There are many reasons why patients may decline DSMES. Common reasons shared by patients in South Dakota include:

- Costs for DSMES (both overall cost and/or cost towards deductible)
- Distance
- Time
- Unaware of what DSMES and what is included in DSMES

Longterm Cost Savings and Return on Investment

One of the biggest concerns patients often have regarding DSMES is the cost to attend. Often, DSMES goes towards a patient's deductible, making the patient not want to attend. It is important to have readily available information to share regarding savings and return on investment for DSMES, such as:

- DSMES has been shown to be cost-effective by reducing hospital admissions and readmissions as well as estimated lifetime healthcare costs related to a lower risk for complications.¹
- DSMES also helps in reducing complications of diabetes. On average, a patient with diabetes has over \$9,600 in diabetes related expenditures directly related to diabetes. By reducing complications, these additional costs can be reduced as well.

Importance of Education

It is important for patients to understand that DSMES was recommended by their provider to help them better understand and manage their diabetes. Providers typically refer their patients to DSMES at four (4) critical times². It is important to reiterate these times to the patient:

1. At diagnosis
2. Annually for assessment of education, nutrition, and emotional needs
3. When new complicating factors (health conditions, physical limitations, emotional factors, or basic living needs) arise that influence self-management
4. When transitions in care occur

Impact on Overall Health and Well-being

It is also important to share with patients that DSMES can also have a positive impact on other clinical and behavioral components of diabetes¹. Participation in DSMES can:

- Reduce the onset and/or progression of diabetes complications
- Increase quality of life
- Encourage long-term lifestyle behavior change
- Enhance self-efficacy and empowerment
- Increase healthy coping
- Decrease diabetes-related depression
- Improve clinical measures, such as improvements in lipid profiles, weight, and blood pressure

Personalized Education

Although DSMES can be offered in a group setting, it is important to share with patients that the education can be customized for their individual needs. When visiting with a patient about DSMES, share specifics about what education could be provided based on their individual situation. Additionally, it may be beneficial for the patient to have a family member DSMES with them to better understand diabetes and managing the disease.

Insurance Coverage of DSMES

With cost being a concern for many patients when discussing DSMES, it is important to not only share information about the long-term cost savings and return on investment from DSMES, but to also share information about insurance coverage. Patients should contact their insurance company first to find out their coverage options for DSMES. For patients with Medicare or SD Medicaid, DSMES (also called DSMT) is covered if certain criteria is met.

If a patient has already reached their yearly deductible, DSMES may also be available at little or no cost for the patient. In South Dakota, patients can visit www.KnowYourPlanSD.com to better understand their insurance coverage for diabetes related services and support.

Summary

When a patient is hesitant or declines DSMES, there are many different talking points that can be addressed with the patient to help them understand the benefits of DSMES. Ultimately, it is up to the patient to decide, but by breaking down possible barriers and providing additional clarification and information to the patient, they may choose to attend DSMES and receive education.

By helping your patients understand the benefits of DSMES and decrease barriers, DSMES programs can continue to sustain and expand their program offerings.

Sources:

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES) Toolkit*. March 12, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/dsmes-toolkit/business-case/roi.html>

²Association of Diabetes Care and Education Specialists. *Four Critical Times to See Your Diabetes Educator*. November 15, 2016. <https://www.diabeteseducator.org/news/perspectives/aade-blog-details/press-releases/2016/11/15/four-critical-times-to-see-your-diabetes-educator>.