



Marketing and Promoting Local DSMES Programs to Patients

Marketing and promoting Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES) programs helps patients understand diabetes education and raises awareness about the service.

Importance of Marketing and Promoting DSMES Programs to the Patients

Marketing and promoting DSMES programs to patients allows them to understand what DSMES is and raises awareness about the service. Patients need to be aware of what DSMES is.

DSMES programs can market and promote their organization internally (or within a healthcare clinic or system) and externally (or publicly). The following detail some high-level ideas for marketing and promoting DSMES to the public.



Marketing DSMES to to the Public - Internal

- **Posters in Facility** - To raise awareness within a facility, a DSMES program could develop posters with information about their program to hang in hallways, elevators, etc.
- **Handouts in Facility** - A rack card or brochure about a DSMES program could be available in primary care clinics and distributed by providers to patients to further introduce DSMES.
- **Website** - Work with your organization's website manager to ensure information is updated and correct on your organization's website regarding your DSMES program.
- **Letters to Patients** - A DSMES program may use Electronic Health Records (EHR) to identify patients with diabetes and send them a letter (and include print material such as a rack card or brochure) to share information about the DSMES program.
- **Social Media** - A DSMES program can work with their organization to post on social media accounts about their DSMES program, importance of DSMES, and other information they wish to share with the followers of the organization's social media accounts.
- **Open House** - To introduce patients at a facility to the DSMES program staff and clinic, a DSMES program can host an open house (possibly during diabetes awareness month) to allow patients to visit with staff and learn more about DSMES.
- **DSMES Program Information for Family Members, Employers, etc-** To assist a patient with diabetes in helping others to understand the importance of DSMES, consider drafting a letter or rack card specifically aimed towards educating family members, employers, etc. about the importance of DSMES. This can help an employer provide time off for the patient to attend DSMES and can also help others better understand DSMES.

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Marketing DSMES to to the Public - External

- **Health Fairs/Community Events** - Having a booth at a health fair or public event is a great way to promote DSMES to the general public and disseminate information about a DSMES program.
- **Service Organizations** - Consider speaking regarding diabetes awareness and DSMES to service organizations in the community. Often times, these organizations are looking for speakers and may be looking for volunteer activities to promote diabetes awareness or education.
- **Billboards/Public Signage** - A billboard or other public signage (i.e. at a local event center) can share information about a local DSMES program with the public.
- **Website** - Work with your organization's website manager to ensure information is updated and correct on your organization's website regarding your DSMES program.
- **Health Screenings** - In collaboration with your organization, consider having a booth at local and regional health screenings.
- **Social Media** - DSMES programs may consider partnering with other organizations to promote and raise awareness about DSMES through social media posts. For example, a local grocery store social media account may share information about a local DSMES program during diabetes awareness month.
- **Internet Marketing** - DSMES programs can work with their organization's marketing department to create banner ads that may appear on website pages. These banner ads can be set up so that they display in a certain geographic area for individuals who may be searching terms related to diabetes. The ads can also include a link to more information which will direct the patient to the DSMES program website.
- **Television Promotion** - Television commercials can be expensive, but there are other opportunities for DSMES programs to be on television to connect with the general public. Consider connecting with local news stations to provide content and an interview opportunity when news stories are about diabetes. Some local television stations also have daytime or weekly talk shows that could feature a DSMES program and share information with viewers about diabetes education.
- **Radio Marketing/Promotion** - DSMES programs can work with their organization to buy airtime to air a commercial regarding the DSMES program at their organization. As airtime for a commercial costs money, a DSMES program could also offer to be on air during a talk show or talk segment to share information about DSMES and diabetes.

Summary

Overall, there isn't a right or wrong answer when it comes to connecting with patients or the public about DSMES and diabetes awareness. Awareness and marketing takes time to develop and promotion of a DSMES program should be ongoing to ensure that patients are always aware of the program.