**Success in Practice article**

**Credentialled Diabetes Educators – Your first referral point for people with diabetes**

In recent years, the understanding of the lasting impact of improved glycaemic control soon after diagnosis, or Legacy Effect, has given health professionals a fresh insight into the benefits of getting people with diabetes on the task early in their diagnosis. However, motivating people to make the lifestyle changes often required to achieve their glycaemic, BP and lipid targets can be challenging. Equally the myriad of increasing diabetes medications can be just as challenging to keep up to date with in a busy practice.

**Why not make the CDE your first referral point when it comes to helping the people with diabetes seen in your service to achieve their diabetes targets?**

A Credentialled Diabetes Educator (CDE) will work with the GP and other health professionals to support each person with diabetes they see to achieve their diabetes care targets. Each person’s diabetes and lifestyle issues are different. Therefore the CDE will work with people with diabetes to help them design a lifestyle and diabetes plan that will work for them.

A CDE’s sole focus is diabetes care and education and they have developed a range of well developed skills that support both people with diabetes and their GPs. While not able to prescribe, CDEs can support GPs in their choice of contemporary diabetes care oral and injectable medications and insulin, while providing people with diabetes with the education necessary for them to take their medication accurately and safely. Utilising titration guides approved by the GP, insulin commencement and titration can be achieved within the primary care setting using a coordinated approach between the GP, CDE and person with diabetes.

General Practitioners (GP) can refer people with diabetes to a Credentialled Diabetes Educator (CDE) by completing an Enhanced Primary Care Programme Referral or as a fee for service appointment. This enables people with diabetes to access the education and clinical expertise of the CDE to focus on what they need to do to be actively involved in their diabetes management. Equally blood glucose monitoring skills will be developed to ensure this is used to further their understanding of their condition and what they should do if the levels are low or high. GPs find it much easier to review a person’s diabetes if they have an appropriately presented set of diabetes numbers to review.

While it is tempting for a GP to send the patient down to the Practice Nurse to get them started in insulin or to be given one of the free meters being dropped into practices for distribution to patients, referral to a CDE is strongly recommended. CDEs specialise in starting people on insulin, utilise insulin titration guides to support GPs and provide a comprehensive education of the person using it to stay safe. They are also able to go through when and how often to use their meter, what the numbers mean and how to use them to stay on top of their diabetes care. The Practice Nurse and CDEs skills can complement each other rather than replace their skills.

A CDE can take the mystery out of supporting people with diabetes to get on top of their diabetes to head in the right direction for good health. Make a CDE referral the first diabetes referral when it comes to improving an individual’s diabetes care outcomes.

**FIND A CDE:** Go to [www.adea.com.au](http://www.adea.com.au) and type in your postcode and the radius you wish to check to find a CDE near you.

**[Pull out box[**

Credentialled Diabetes Educators have completed and maintained specialised training that complements their base degree (Registered Nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, podiatrist or exercise physiologist) including:

* Graduate Certificate in Diabetes Education and Management
* At least 1800 hours of diabetes education practice in the 4 years prior to CDE application
* Evidence of ongoing professional development
* An undertaking to practice in accordance to the [ADEA Code of Conduct](http://www.adea.com.au/asset/view_document/979315966) and [ADEA Standards of Practice](http://www.adea.com.au/main/forhealthprofessionals/guidelinesandstandards/ourstandardsofpractice).