

Health Care Reform and Diabetes

By Robin Nwankwo

The federal health care reform legislation (*the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care & Education Affordability Act of 2010*) became law in March 2010 and took effect in September 2010. This legislation includes many new tools in the fight to stop diabetes. Most recently is the adoption of guidelines ensuring women receive designated preventive services at no additional cost. As an example, all women may now be screened for gestational diabetes without charging a copayment, deductible or coinsurance.

Within this legislation, the Patient's Bill of Rights details a set of protections for consumers that apply to all individual market and group health plans with few exceptions. The protections that apply to diabetes include:

- People with diabetes can no longer be denied insurance or forced to pay more for coverage simply because they have diabetes.
- Grants to community organizations for lifestyle intervention programs to prevent type 2 diabetes will be available through the Program to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes.
- Medicare Annual Wellness Visit and Personalized Prevention Plan: A free annual wellness visit is available in Medicare to identify a person's health risks and establish a personalized prevention plan.

Other Michigan benefits from the Affordable Care Act that help people with diabetes include:

- The Prevention and Public Health Fund supports programs across Michigan, including community and clinical prevention activities, support of public health infrastructure to strengthen state and local capacity to meet 21st century public health challenges and investment in primary care training.

- **Medicare Part D "Donut Hole" Rebate Checks:** In Michigan, 90,795 Medicare beneficiaries received a one time, tax free \$250 rebate to help pay for prescriptions in the "donut hole" coverage gap. In 2011, beneficiaries will receive a 50 percent discount for covered brand-name prescriptions in the donut hole.
- Uninsured Michigan residents can enroll in the **Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan:** This plan provides a health coverage option for consumers who have been uninsured for at least six months and have a pre-existing condition or have been denied health coverage because of their health condition. To be eligible, the consumer must be a U.S. citizen or residing here legally. In Michigan, the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan is operated by the state government.
- **A Consumer Assistance Program** helps strengthen ongoing efforts in the states and local communities to protect consumers.
- **A Crack Down on Unreasonable Insurance Premium Increases** will improve the review process by contracting with experts who review insurance premium filings made by HMOs and commercial carriers. This will increase transparency and accessibility and will also result in a webpage that will provide consumer friendly information.



- **Health Insurance Exchange:** This will result in a better health insurance marketplace.

- Employers enrolled in **Early Retiree Reinsurance Program** will be provided with much-needed financial relief in order to help retirees and their families continue to have quality, affordable health coverage.

For more information about the new Patient's Bill of Rights and how this protects consumers and those with diabetes, see the December DPAC newsletter.

To learn more about the Affordable Care Act, please visit <http://www.healthcare.gov>

Changes underway with MODE (Michigan Organization of Diabetes Educators)

By Ann Scott

In April, members of MODE voted to transition to a new national organizational model for diabetes educators developed by AADE (American Association of Diabetes Educators). Prior to this vote, all MODE members were members of AADE so that has not changed. However, merging with AADE has some features that some viewed as positive and some viewed as negative, so many months of discussion and controversy ended in a vote in April.



As current President of MODE, I have supported this transition for several reasons. Number one is access to MYAADE NETWORK. This is an online community for Diabetes Educators throughout the country. One can now easily ask a question and start a discussion that reaches beyond Michigan educators. We can register for conferences via this website. This online resource has great potential to bring us together to learn and to promote self management education. Both of these are consistent with our mission and purpose.

Another reason for my support is that I believe this model will grow our Michigan organization. Our MODE numbers were around 250 members, but almost that same number of Michigan educators were not MODE members. Now we are one and have better access to one another. Already with this vote, we have seen increased interest in getting involved. And in this busy life, growing a volunteer organization is challenging despite its laudable mission.

Our mission remains the same: Advance the role of the diabetes educator and improve the quality of diabetes education and care. Our purposes remain the same: Provide educational opportunities for our members; promote and aid the growth and development of quality diabetes self management education for person with diabetes; foster communication and cooperation among individuals and organizations involved in diabetes education; and advance lifestyle management for the prevention of diabetes. Members include health professionals and others interested in our mission and purposes.

Over the coming year we will be changing the name of our organization to better reflect our new partnership with AADE. MODE and our MODE logo will no longer be used. **We are Michigan members of AADE.** Our leadership groups are now **Michigan Coordinating Body (CB) of AADE** (formerly MODE Board of Directors) and our nine regional groups are now nine **Local Networking Groups (LNGs)**.

With health care reform there are many issues facing health care providers. Michigan diabetes educators play an important role in disease management and prevention. We now have tools to come together nationally to discuss issues and together promote self management education. If you are dedicated to quality diabetes care, consider joining our organization. Go to the website www.diabeteseducator.org and check us out! Together we make a difference!

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Getting ready for Diabetes Month? November is right around the corner!

Need information or materials to prepare for Diabetes Month? The National Diabetes Education Program (NDEP) has a wealth of materials and information to lend support when developing awareness messages or press releases.



The theme this year for Diabetes Month is "Make a Plan to Prevent Diabetes and Its Complications." The focus of this year's campaign is to help people take action to make lifestyle changes whether they have diabetes or are at risk for diabetes. The NDEP website has materials, fact sheets, "real people" stories, and more (ndep.nih.gov).

For Michigan information, please visit the Diabetes Prevention and Control Program at MDCH for diabetes, prediabetes and gestational diabetes fact sheets (www.michigan.gov/diabetes).

Upcoming Events Calendar:

DPAC Full Membership Meeting - Kellogg Center

Thursday, October 20, 2011 – 9:30-4:00pm

Diabetes Month Capitol Event, November 9th

Capitol Rotunda 11:30-1:30

