

On Becoming a Diabetes Nurse Educator

DNIG receives many requests for information about how best to prepare for a career as a Diabetes Nurse Educator. The Canadian Diabetes Educator (CDE) certificate is the gold standard and requires a lot of preparation. Here are some suggestions about where to start. The information was put together by the DNIG executive with help from DNIG member Aileen Knip RN BScN CDE and is posted on the DNIG website.

As you probably know, acquiring clinical experience in diabetes care is a challenge. If you have any tips, please pass them on and we will add them to the document. You can submit your ideas to any member of the executive.

Canadian Diabetes Educator Certification Board (CDECB) Study Guide

CDECB oversees the Canadian Diabetes Educator (CDE) certification process. The cost for sitting the examination is \$450 (application and examination fees). Certification is good for 5 years and can now be maintained by accumulating a credit portfolio.)

Beginning in 2006, new eligibility criteria apply. Now, healthcare professionals who are licensed by a Regulatory College in Canada and have accumulated 800 hours of diabetes education experience over the previous 3 years encompassing a broad range of competencies, may apply to write the examination. This opens up the examination to additional members of the multidisciplinary team, such as Chiropractors and Registered Practical Nurses.

The examination is based on Canadian standards. When you register, you will get a study guide, which explains what the exam entails and gives 3 test questions. For an extra \$30.00, you can purchase a test question booklet with 20 questions and answers, with rationale.

For additional information, go to the CDECB website, where you can download a certification handbook: <http://www.cdecb.ca/>
Or, you can contact CDECB by e-mail: cdecb@sympatico.ca

The application deadline is February each year, the examination is in May.

Advice from Aileen Knip,:

"I found the CDE resources very helpful when preparing for the examination. For study purposes, I would recommend "Building Competency in Diabetes Education: The Essentials". This can be purchased from CDA professional resources for around \$225.00.

But...are you ready for certification?

"The problem I hear from many nurses interested in diabetes management is obtaining the required diabetes experience/hours. CDECB has strict guidelines for sitting the examination—the same holds true for

writing any of the CNA exams. How can a nurse obtain the required 2 days per week for 2 years in direct diabetes education when diabetes centers will for the most part only hire you with a CDE? I know for myself I just so happened to be in the right place at the right time. I was asked to start up a diabetes program for our local community hospital—this was after I had taken the diabetes educator program at the University of Toronto—but this program is no longer offered.”

Diabetes Courses

1. The Michener Institute Diabetes Educator Certificate Program.

Aileen Knip says:

This program will provide the knowledge required for diabetes management but of course you will still require the necessary clinical experience to write the CDE.

The Michener Diabetes Educator Certificate Program was launched in January 2004.

The program is offered by distance education (on-line) with regional workshops across Canada. Two levels are offered: Basic and Advanced. You can study on your own time, at your own pace. You may complete one level in as little as one year and finish any time within three years. (Level 1 should take 6 –12 months to complete depending on previous knowledge level.)

The program is curriculum based and follows the International Curriculum for Diabetes Health Professional Education (available from the International Diabetes Federation). The content has been approved by the CDA.

The program is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and tuition will be approximately 1400.00\$ Canadian

Admission Requirements

1) Degree or diploma in a related health profession—that is, membership in a Professional College (College of Nurses, Pharmacists, Dietitians, Chiropodist, etc.), and 2) a minimum of two years of current patient care experience. It is not necessary to have experience in Diabetes Education but obviously you need to have an interest to take the program.

You can contact Michener by e-mail: info@michener.ca, or, through the website http://www.michener.ca/ce/postdiploma/diabetes_educator.php

The application deadline is September each year.

2. Confederation College in Thunder Bay and Cambrian College in Sudbury jointly offer the Diabetes Education Certificate Program

Aileen Knip says:

"This is an excellent way to learn the basics of diabetes and to also see if this is a specialty you wish to pursue. I have spoken with people who have taken the program and hear it is excellent. Of course you still must obtain the clinical hours in order to write the CDE and fieldwork courses cannot be applied to hours needed towards writing the CDE."

Program of Study

200 hours, 6 courses at 3 levels of study

Level 1 (BASIC) Diabetes: the Basics, and Introduction to Patient Education

-this level can be taken by any member of the health field; only regulated health professionals can take levels 2 & 3.

Level 2 (INTERMEDIATE) Living with Diabetes, Special Issues in Diabetes

Level 3 (ADVANCED) Fieldwork I, Fieldwork II

Health care professionals must complete all three levels to earn the post-graduate certificate from the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. (You can challenge level 1 and level 2 courses.

The program is offered either through Audioconference or Independent Study.

Contact the Community College that serves your area:

Confederation College has 2 sites:

Northwestern Ontario 1-800-563-9435

Thunder Bay, Ontario 1-807-475-6233

You can download an application package from their website:

<http://www.confederationc.on.ca/ce/health/diabetes.asp>

or by calling 1-807-473-3850

Cambrian College (Sudbury)

Northern Ontario: 1-800-461-7145

Sudbury, Ontario: 1-705-566-8101 Ext. 7223

For information on the course, go to:

<https://secure.cambrianc.on.ca/coned/showcert.cfm?strCert=dict.htm>

The Northern Diabetes Health Network helped to develop the curriculum and recommends the program on their website:

<http://www.ndhn.com/professional-certificate.html>

Ontario Learn.com is a consortium of 22 Ontario Community Colleges dedicated to developing and delivering online courses.

Health Care Professionals WR440

Introduction to Patient Education WR441

This course discusses learning styles and readiness to learn as related to people with diabetes and examines the role of the adult educator and effective teaching strategies. Participants design lesson plans and evaluation techniques. This is the second theory course in the Diabetes Education Certificate program.

Prerequisite: WR440

Living with Diabetes WR442

This course is designed for health care providers working in or planning to work in the field of Diabetes education. Participants examine hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia and their impact on Diabetes management. They discuss and illustrate teaching strategies for use with clients who have special needs, such as learning disabilities, or visual or language impairments. Cultural issues, especially those that deal with the incidence of Diabetes among First Nations People, are presented.

Prerequisites: WR440, WR441

Special Issues with Diabetes WR444

This course examines pregnancy in Diabetes, gestational Diabetes, and Diabetes in children, adolescents and the elderly. Long-term complications that people with Diabetes may experience are discussed. Participants examine the design and evaluation of Diabetes education programs.

Prerequisites: WR442

http://www.ontariolearn.com/index.php?page=course_622

The courses are hosted by Confederation College and are being offered in the fall 2006 through:

Confederation

Loyalist

Mohawk

Northern

Sault

Sir Sandford Fleming*

St. Lawrence*

*Do not offer WR444

3. Other Community College Courses

Community colleges may offer other continuing education courses related to diabetes care. For instance, Algonquin College, Ottawa offers basic and advanced nursing skills for foot care courses, a practicum and a workshop on use of a dremel sander, twice a year. The advanced foot care course teaches the theory of advanced foot care skills such as padding, strapping, ram's horn nail and nail packing and reviews special care issues for geriatric, diabetic and vascular patients.

Nursing Skills for Foot Care Course: NSG6688

<http://xweb.algonquincollege.com/courseDetail.aspx?id=NSG6688>

Advanced Foot Care Skills for Nurses Course: NSG6727

<http://xweb.algonquincollege.com/courseDetail.aspx?id=NSG6727>

Foot care practicum Course: NSG6728

<http://xweb.algonquincollege.com/courseDetail.aspx?id=NSG6728>

4. The Diabetes Wellness Centre

The A-Z Self study program is run by Carole Ash out of Winnipeg. The program is offered about twice a year and can be conducted by correspondence or by e-mail. You can get in touch with Carol at 1-204 487-1852

Marg. Little advises that it is best to call ahead to discuss your needs with Carol. A fair number of people are interested in the course and participation is limited.

Diabetes Conferences and Workshops

Conferences and workshops provide an opportunity to get an overview of diabetes care and support and help you to keep abreast of the trends. As well, they are good place for networking.

The Diabetes Nursing Interest Group Conference was held at the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa on June 2, 2006. The theme of the conference was "The Many Faces of Diabetes: Implementing Best Practices Across Populations and Settings".

The Options for Diabetes Conference is held annually around the third week of April in Kingston. *The date for next year's conference is April 7-8, 2007*

The Canadian Diabetes Association (CDA)/Canadian Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism (CSEM) brings together educators, clinicians and scientists to share expertise, ideas and experience in diabetes and other endocrine

disorders. *The Professional Conference and Annual Meetings this year will be held in Toronto from Oct 18-21, 2006*
http://www.diabetes.ca/section_professionals/index.asp

Aileen Knip: *" I attend this conference every year and it is a great learning experience at a reasonable cost."*

RNAO Educational Funding

As a member of RNAO, you have access to grants, bursaries and fellowships and to discounts on publications.

1. Nursing Initiatives Fund

This tuition reimbursement program funded by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care provides grants to support continuing education of individual nurses so that they can improve their knowledge and professional skills. The application form was in the Summer edition of the College Communique and can also be downloaded from the RNAO web site at www.rnao.org

2. The Advanced Clinical/Practice Fellowships (ACPF)

Proposals can be submitted in one of three focus areas;

1. Clinical
2. Leadership
3. Best Practice Guideline Implementation

Lillian Delmas explains how the ACPF can make an impact on patient care and nursing practice?

When Lillian was awarded an Advanced Clinical/Practice Fellowship in March 2000, she used it to develop a specialized, coordinated, evidence-based diabetes education program for clients at the Rehabilitation Centre in Ottawa. It was a lot of work but she feels it was worth it. There was enthusiastic interdisciplinary interest and participation and, Lillian says, "the outcome has far surpassed my wildest expectations!" In addition to providing an opportunity to pursue a keen interest in diabetes, the Fellowship opened the door to "another life". This included working on the RNAO Best Practice Guideline: Reducing Foot Complications for People with Diabetes, and membership on the DNIG executive. So, DNIG has a lot to thank ACPF for.

Please visit the website http://www.rnao.org/projects/acpf/index.asp_to read more about ACPF.

3. RNAO Education Loans & Scholarships

After one year of membership, RNAO members and associates are eligible to apply for an education loan. Repayment of your loan does not start until after the completion of your course. There is no interest until one year after repayment begins. Interest is prime plus 1%.

http://www.rnao.org/Page.asp?PageID=122&ContentID=619&SiteNodeID=149&BL_ExpandID=