

A close-up photograph of a Black female nurse with her hair in braids, wearing blue scrubs and a stethoscope. She is smiling warmly and looking towards the right side of the frame. In the background, another person is partially visible, wearing glasses and a dark cap.

Diabetes Educational Resources for General Practice and Primary Care Nurses

Background

- Diabetes is a complex metabolic disorder and there are several types
- Pre-diabetes or non-diabetic hyperglycaemia is where there is a risk of developing type 2 diabetes however with dietary and lifestyle interventions this risk can be reduced.
- **Type 1** diabetes is an autoimmune condition where by the pancreas does not produce insulin and the treatment is always insulin. Multiple daily insulin injections are used by many but the used of insulin pumps and hybrid closed loop systems are increasing.
- **Type 2 diabetes** occurs due to insulin resistance and the insulin produced by the pancreas doesn't work effectively. Over time insufficient insulin production may also occur. Type 2 diabetes accounts for around 10% of the annual NHS budget
- **Gestational diabetes (GDM)** occurs during pregnancy and increases the risk of developing type 2 diabetes after pregnancy. Women with previous GDM should have annual HbA1c surveillance.
- **Type 3c**, **MODY** and **Latent Autoimmune Diabetes in Adults** (LADA) are less common types of diabetes but may still be seen in general practice (links for more information)
- Management of risk to reduce cardiovascular and microvascular complications in General Practice is key, with annual or bi- annual reviews depending on level of need. General Practice Nurses (GPNs) are the cornerstone to providing this care.
- Individualised care with patient education and health promotion is essential for people with diabetes to manage their condition.

Professional Resources for Diabetes

[Type 1 diabetes in adults: diagnosis and management](#)

[Overview | Type 1 diabetes in adults: diagnosis and management | Guidance | NICE](#)

[Type 2 diabetes in adults: Management](#)

[Overview | Type 2 diabetes in adults: management | Guidance | NICE](#)

<https://www.cdep.org.uk/home.html> Patient Resources for Diabetes

[Diabetes UK – Know Your Risk of Type 2 diabetes](#)

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/diabetes/diabetes-prevention/resources/provider-contact-details/>



Key messages

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- It is vital GPNs are up to date with information on diabetes and work with patients to maximize their health with health education and promotion.
- Nurses undertaking all aspects of diabetes care need to be familiar with the 9 care processes that are integral to standards and excellence in care. The Primary Care Diabetes Society offers entry level modules to support clinical practice. Entry Level Modules Series – DiabetesontheNet
- The GPN plays an integral key role in promoting lifestyle interventions such as weight reduction, increased physical activity, healthy eating, reduced alcohol consumption, and smoking cessation.
- The GPN in partnership with people and families, works in setting individualized targets and supporting patient goals.
- Working to within their scope of practice, General Practice Nurses can lead, enable and support patients and families in the management of their diabetes.
- Annual reviews are a critical opportunity to support people to be aware of their own health status and to deliver key health promotion messages.
- Utilizing skills of Nursing Associates (NAs) Health Care Assistants (HCAs) and unregistered staff to support patients is key with appropriate delegation and clinical supervision.

Critical Call to action

- Continuous access to education is key for all GPNs no matter their level of proficiency, as they have a key part to play in diabetes care.
- Individualized care for the person living with diabetes helps to engage them with self management and maximize their health outcomes.
- GPNs know their patients well and can support them to achieve their long-term health goals, as part of the therapeutic nurse patient partnership.



Core Capabilities Framework

	Support Work Level Practice	Nursing Associate Level/Assistant Level Practice	Registered Nurse level	Registered Nurse: Enhanced Level Practice	Registered Nurse: Advanced Level Practice	Registered Nurse: Consultant Level Practice
Capability 1. Communication and consultation skills	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 2. Practising holistically to personalise care and promote public and person health	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 3. Working with colleagues and in teams	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 4. Maintaining an ethical approach and fitness to practice	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 5. Information gathering and interpretation	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 6. Clinical examination and procedural skills	Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 7. Making a diagnosis			Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 8. Clinical management		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 9. Managing medical and clinical complexity		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 10. Independent prescribing and pharmacotherapy		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 11. Leadership, management and organisation		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 12. Education and development		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 13. Research and evidence based practice		Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3
Capability 14. Strategic Management						Tier 3

The framework articulates core capabilities necessary for safe and effective care. The capabilities (i.e., skills, knowledge, and behaviours) described in the framework are defined at 3 tiers.

Each tier articulates the minimum and core capability to be expected as opposed to the maximum:

- **Tier 1:** Capabilities that require a general understanding and that support provision of primary care/general practice nursing.
- **Tier 2:** Capabilities that enable the provision of care more independently and a degree of critical analysis.
- **Tier 3:** Capabilities that require an ability to provide care autonomously and independently, an ability to lead practice, operating at the cutting edge of innovation.

More information is available [here](#).



Scope of Practice

Role Level Descriptor	Tier and Scope of Practice Aligned to Primary Care Core Career and Capabilities Framework	Qualifications	Skills and Application of Knowledge and Scope of Practice
Health Care Support Worker	1	Introduction or awareness course – 1–3-day duration Period supervised practice from GPN/ANP until deemed competent and proficient within scope of practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to complete annual reviews • Diet and lifestyle advice for high-risk diabetes patients only
NA	1	Diabetes specific course at Level 5 or below Period supervised practice from GPN/ANP until deemed competent and proficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to complete annual reviews • Diet and lifestyle advice for high-risk diabetes and diet-controlled diabetes patients • Support for patients on oral therapies only
GPN Enhanced Level	2	Diabetes specific course at Level 6 or 7 to cover oral, injectable and insulin therapy including initiation and titration Period supervised practice from GPN/ANP until deemed proficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral therapy management • Injectable therapy management (GLP-1) • Insulin initiation and titration • Supervising capacity for junior or new members of staff • Leadership of diabetes in practice setting for audit work and policy creation Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Prescribing
ANP	3	Level 7 Advanced Nurse Practitioner Pathway with incorporated disease specific module or course Level 7 Advanced Nurse Practitioner pathway with standalone disease specific module or course Diabetes specific course at Level 6 or 7 to cover oral, injectable and insulin therapy including initiation and titration Period supervised practice from GPN/ANP until deemed competent and proficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral therapy management • Injectable therapy management (GLP-1) • Insulin initiation and titration • Cholesterol and BP management – initiation and titration of medication • Supervising capacity for junior or new members of staff • Leadership of diabetes in practice setting for audit work and policy creation • Independent Prescribing

Resources for Tier 1

- Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) and Nursing Associates (NAs) should be able to differentiate between the different types of diabetes and have an awareness on how patients are diagnosed with diabetes. Diabetes UK: <https://tinyurl.com/3686ja8m> RCN: www.rcn.org.uk/clinical-topics/Diabetes/Diabetes-essentials#typesofdiabetes
- HCAs and NAs should also be capable of understanding the need for foot screening and foot checks. [Training modules \(NHS England\) – Diabetes Foot Screening \(diabetesframe.org\)](#)
- Their proficiencies and scope of practice should encompass foot checks, physical assessment such as blood pressure measurement, and providing advice and support on physical parameters such as weight, BMI, smoking status and alcohol consumption, under supervision of experienced Registered Nursing staff. Giving patients education about weight management including diet, alcohol, smoking [Live Well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Courses are available [Home | Diabetes UK CPD, ELfH http://portal.e-lfh.org.uk/Component/Details/555006](#)
- Reporting of abnormal results via medical records and where necessary reporting to registered clinician for immediate actions.

Resources for Tier 1 (cont)

Those working at Tier 1 should be able to perform blood glucose measurements, including taking blood and urine tests for both diagnosis and monitoring, and follow their employer's policies and procedures to undertake aspects of care in line with supervision guidance.

- Additionally, HCAs and NAs should understand the key symptoms of both type 1 and type 2 diabetes, and understand their importance, as well as how to signpost to accredited resources.
- HCAs and NAs can undertake the 'Essentials of Diabetes Care' provided by Education for Health [Essentials of Diabetes - Education For Health](#)
- The Cambridge Diabetes Education Programme provides support at 4 levels of practice, starting with HCA's and NAs. [Cambridge Diabetes Education Programme | About Us \(cdep.org.uk\)](#)
- HCAs/NAs should also understand the available prevention programs and how to signpost them. [NHS England » NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme \(NHS DPP\)](#)
- Eden's Essentials programme is explicitly aimed a Tier 1 level practice www.edendiabetes.com

Health Care Support Workers



Supporting both new entrants and experienced healthcare support workers in primary care settings, these modules provide comprehensive training on essential skills and best practices in assisting patients with diabetes



Resources for Tier 2

All the resources recommended for Tier 1 will still be helpful for Tier 2 staff.

In addition, for Tier 2:

- There are foundational courses developed to provide education on the fundamentals of long-term care for those with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes. [Pit Stop for Diabetes](#) has created a 3-day face to face course whilst [Rotherham Respiratory](#) have created a similar e-learning course.
 - Rotherham Respiratory also have an [advanced course](#) for those with the foundational skills looking to advance their knowledge to provide further care for their patients during annual reviews
 - The [RCGP](#) offers a short course for healthcare professionals new to or looking to refresh their knowledge of performing a diabetes medication review, including the importance of shared decision making when prescribing and deprescribing
 - The [Primary Care Diabetes Society](#) has developed a short course designed specifically for healthcare professionals working in primary care, on how to improve the safety surrounding the prescribing of, and use of, insulin in the community.
- Eden has following course for improving knowledge and confidence in using Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) devices: [3 Steps to Glucose Sensing — EDEN \(edendiabetes.com\)](#)
 - Registered Nurses new to aspects of Diabetes care and management, may wish to undertake the Warwick Diploma to support knowledge, skills and proficiency [Diploma in Improving Diabetes Care \(IDC\) \(warwick.ac.uk\)](#)

Resources for Tier 2

Eden is an NHS education provider that is part of the Leicester Diabetes Centre at the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust which has a whole range of primary care specific diabetes educational resources. Contact eden@uhl-tr.nhs.uk or visit www.edendiabetes.com for more information. Below are some examples:



In addition to the core Complement Plus programme, our recommended education pathway caters to both new and experienced healthcare professionals in primary care, offering comprehensive refreshers and updates on treatment protocols, patient care strategies, and the latest advancements in managing chronic illnesses. These modules can be delivered as standalone units or mixed and matched, providing flexibility to suit individual learning needs, providing comprehensive knowledge and practical strategies, and empowering healthcare professionals to deliver optimal care and improve patient outcomes in primary care settings.

Supportive Modules



Additionally, we offer a range of supplementary modules designed to provide healthcare professionals with additional knowledge and skills. In an ever-growing and challenging environment, these modules serve as invaluable resources, equipping professionals with the tools and insights necessary to navigate complexities and excel in primary care practice.

Eden has following course for improving knowledge and confidence in using Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) devices:

[3 Steps to Glucose Sensing — EDEN \(edendiabetes.com\)](http://www.edendiabetes.com)

The University of Leicester have a Level 7 Module on Technology and Type 1 Diabetes <https://le.ac.uk/modules/2024/md7527>



Resources for Tier 3

All the resources recommended for Tier 1 and 2 will still be helpful for Tier 3 staff.

- Whilst there is not a nationally recognised qualification for advanced level nursing in diabetes, it is recommended that GPNs working at Tier 3 level should have undergone training at diploma level 6 or level 7 or hold a specialist qualification such as historical (ENB 928) diabetes nursing, with evidence of CPD.
- Examples of courses available, which are affiliated to universities & meet Level 5 & 6 include: [Diploma in Improving Diabetes Care \(IDC\) \(warwick.ac.uk\)](#)
- For ANP and consultant level diabetes nursing a Level 7 qualification would be expected with clinical experience at this level. A full range of university accredited diabetes course can be found on the DSN Forum UK website <https://www.diabetesspecialistnurseforumuk.co.uk/hcp-resources>

Below are some examples:

[Advancing Diabetes Care - Module / MSc / PgDip - 2024/25 Entry | Birmingham City University \(bcu.ac.uk\)](#)

[Diabetes MSc, PGDip, PGCert, by distance learning | University of Leicester](#)

[Diabetes CPD by distance learning | University of Leicester](#)

[Technology and Type 1 Diabetes | University of Leicester](#)

<https://www.swansea.ac.uk/postgraduate/taught/medicine/diabetes-practice-msc-pgdip-pgcert/>



Resources for Tier 3

Eden Complement Plus

- A 20-week (15 CPD hours) award-winning digital learning package designed to empower clinicians in providing optimal care for individuals with diabetes.
- Comprising four modules, each featuring pre-recorded lessons, digital learning, and live remote mentoring.
- Accessible via an online learning portal, participants receive login credentials to access all resources and mentoring event schedules.

Laying the Foundations

- Explore the varied oral treatment options for type 2 diabetes management.
- Understand the mode of action, common side effects, cautions and benefits of the different classes of medications.
- Identify the different considerations when choosing treatments, such as lifestyle management, obesity, cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease and frailty.
- Understand the timely need for treatment intensification to avoid therapeutic inertia.
- Be aware of the different glucose lowering guidelines that are used to guide clinical decision making.
- Be aware of the importance and the benefits of patient-centred holistic management

Oral Therapies

- Understanding diabetes and its diagnostic criteria.
- Recognising common complications and their impact on life and treatment choices.
- Individualising target levels for patients safely and employing patient-centered decision cycles
- Setting goals of care and strategies to avoid clinical inertia.
- Emphasizing the importance of prevention and lifestyle changes in both type 1 and type 2 diabetes.
- Discussing the care pathway for newly diagnosed individuals and the longterm consequences of diabetes.
- Performing basic screenings for associated complications and facilitating referrals to structured education programmes.

Injectable Therapies

- Explore the benefits and challenges of insulin and GLP-1 receptor agonists (GLP-1 RAs).
- Be able to identify when insulin and/or GLP-1 RA initiation is appropriate.
- Explore the evidence and benefits of considering combination therapy of insulin with GLP-1 RAs, and addressing starting and continuing therapy protocols.
- Understand the different insulin types, time action profiles and deliver devices
- Become familiar with the mode of action of the different GLP-RA and dual agonists and delivery devices.
- Explore the practical aspects of correct injection technique, injection site examination, detection and management of lipohypertrophy.
- Understand how to titrate insulin effectively and identify when insulin therapy may need intensification.
- Be aware of all of the educational elements of initiating insulin and/or GLP-1RAs and how to convey the key information to your patients.

CaReMe (Cardio-Renal-Metabolic)

- Defining expectations and significance of diabetes care.
- Exploring the CaReMe relationship in diabetes management.
- Addressing cardiovascular and kidney diseases in relation to diabetes.
- Strategies for managing blood pressure and cholesterol levels in diabetes patients.
- Emphasising the role of these interventions in preventing or delaying complications and enhancing quality of life.



For more information...

- Many ICSs offer free training to primary care staff. Every practice and PCN will have access to Training Hub resources and guidance. There are 42 at Integrated Care System (ICS) level, with several locality hubs that help support links between practices and PCNs. Click [here](#) to find your local Training Hub or email the national team on traininghubs@hee.nhs.uk.
- The NHS [knowledge and library hub](#) connects healthcare staff and trainees to a significant range of high-quality knowledge and evidence resources, services, tools, and databases. Accessed using NHS [OpenAthens](#) or through a local NHS Health library, it's a good resource for GPs and practice staff.
- Updated NICE guidance on the diagnosis and management of type 1 and type 2 diabetes is available and should be referred to for any updates.

Useful Links and Resources

- [Diabetes & Primary Care – DiabetesontheNet](#)
- [Diabetes UK - Know diabetes. Fight diabetes. | Diabetes UK](#)
- Eden [EDEN \(edendiabetes.com\)](http://edendiabetes.com)
- Diabetes Specialist Nurse Forum UK [DSN Forum \(diabetesspecialistnurseforumuk.co.uk\)](http://diabetesspecialistnurseforumuk.co.uk)
- Leicester Diabetes Centre [Leicester Diabetes Centre](#)



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