

How do I become a diabetes educator?

One must be a healthcare professional who has a defined role as a diabetes educator, not for those who may perform some diabetes related functions as part of or in the course of other usual and customary duties.

Practice as a diabetes educator means actively employed for compensation, providing a direct or indirect professional contribution to the care and self-management education of people with diabetes.

Diabetes education, also referred to as diabetes self-management education or diabetes self-management training, is performed by health care professionals who have appropriate credentials and experience consistent with the particular profession's scope of practice. Diabetes self-management education is defined as the interactive, collaborative, ongoing process involving the person with diabetes or pre-diabetes and/or the caregivers and the educator(s). The process includes:

- Assessment of the individual's specific education needs
- Identification of the individual's specific diabetes self-management goals
- Education and behavioral intervention directed toward helping the individual achieve identified self-management goals
- Evaluation(s) of the individual's attainment of identified self-management goals
- Proper documentation of all education encounters

Diabetes educators can be found in a variety of settings: hospitals, physician offices, clinics, home health, wellness programs, to name a few. They most often work within accredited or recognized diabetes education programs. This means that the diabetes education program has met requirements set forth by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and can bill for diabetes self-management training through two different codes: G0108 and G0109, which are for individual and group diabetes education.

[View practice documents related to diabetes education.](#)

After working in the field for a while, many diabetes educators choose to pursue the Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) credential. *See below for information on becoming a CDE.*

AADE resources for people interested in learning the basics of diabetes education:

[Career Path Program, Levels 1 and 2](#)

[ABCs of Diabetes Education](#)

How do I become a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE)?

In order to become a CDE one must first meet the eligibility requirements set forth by the National Certification Board for Diabetes Educators (NCBDE). Please note: The CDE credential is fully administered and maintained by NCBDE. AADE does not have a role in the process, but does have products that assist in preparing for the CDE exam.

NCBDE has set two eligibility requirements:

- 1) Eligible healthcare professional; i.e. nurse, dietitian, pharmacist, occupational or physical therapist, etc.
- 2) Professional practice experience with a minimum of 1,000 hours of diabetes self-management education experience, with 40% of those hours accrued in the most recent year preceding application.

Please note: This is only a summary of requirements. Additional information can be found on the NCBDE website: www.ncbde.org.

Professional practice experience is defined as employment for compensation as a diabetes educator within the past four years.

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If the two requirements are met then the next step would be to take the national certification examination. Upon receiving a passing score the certification credential of CDE would be granted.

For detailed eligibility requirements and examination information including application contact NCBDE at www.ncbde.org.

AADE resources to help you prepare for the CDE exam:

Courses:

- [Core Concepts Course – Live](#)
- [Core Concepts Course - Online](#)

Books

- [The Art & Science of Diabetes Self-Management Education Desk Reference](#)
- [The Diabetes Education Review Guide](#)
- [Quick Guide to Medications](#)