

Talking Points for Engaging With Health Care Providers on Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES) Services

These talking points provide key messages that will help health care providers better understand DSMES services and how DSMES can help their patients. This document also includes information on the messages and materials in the *DSMES Promotion Playbook*.

The talking points are not meant to be used verbatim or read like a script. They are a guide for you to adapt to your style of speaking so they are easy to recall and share. They cover a variety of topics, and you will not need to use all of them in every conversation. Choose the messages that are most relevant as you tailor your conversations with health care providers.

About DSMES Services (Source: [DSMES Toolkit](#))

- DSMES is an evidence-based diabetes management service model that is defined as “the ongoing process of facilitating the knowledge, skills, and ability necessary for diabetes self-care, as well as activities that assist a person in implementing and sustaining the behaviors needed to manage his or her condition on an ongoing basis, beyond or outside of formal self-management training.”
- Studies have shown that DSMES services can help people make positive lifestyle changes, such as developing healthier eating patterns or increasing activity levels. These changes can ultimately lead to decreases in hemoglobin A1C levels, prevention or delay of diabetes complications, and improved quality of life.
- On average, a person with diabetes spends less than 1% of their life with their health care team accessing services. The focus of DSMES services is to help “the person with diabetes develop problem-solving skills and attain ongoing decision-making support necessary to self-manage diabetes.”

About the *DSMES Promotion Playbook*

Overview

- Even with evidence supporting the benefits of DSMES services, use is low. This new resource, the *DSMES Promotion Playbook*, was created to provide a clear and consistent way of talking about DSMES services and their benefits that is meaningful to people with diabetes. The goal is to help increase participation in these services.
- The *DSMES Promotion Playbook* was developed through a collaborative effort of CDC and national partners, with insight from people with diabetes, diabetes care

and education specialists, referring health care providers, state health departments, and accredited and recognized programs delivering DSMES services.

- Materials are available to help you in your efforts to engage patients in diabetes management and support. These materials provide a clear and consistent description of DSMES services and benefits. This “one voice” approach can help reach more people with the skills, tools, and support they need to manage their diabetes in ways that fit their lifestyle. Consistent messages and images can inspire people and motivate them to act.
- We have tailored these materials to include information on DSMES services offered by our organization, including the format of DSMES classes (in person or online), as well as time and location details. We encourage you to use the materials at the following four key times to refer patients to DSMES services:
 - At diagnosis
 - Annually
 - When complicating factors occur
 - During transitions of care

Plain Language Descriptions of DSMES Services

The *DSMES Promotion Playbook* provides plain language descriptions to help you communicate about DSMES services. These messages were developed with insight from people with diabetes, diabetes care and education specialists, and other health care providers and partners. They have been tailored for people with diabetes or for health care providers and partners.

Descriptions for people with diabetes:

Whether you are new to having diabetes or have had it for years, when you receive diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) services, you will:

- Work with a diabetes care and education specialist to set and track goals.
- Learn how to use knowledge, skills, and tools to build confidence and emotional strength to manage diabetes.
- Practice how to fit diabetes care into all parts of your daily routine—like when and what you eat and how you solve problems.
- Find ways to get support (in person and online) from your family, friends, community, and health care team.

Ask a health care provider or find a local program through the [Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists](#) or the [American Diabetes Association](#).

Descriptions for health care providers and partners:

Diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) services help people with diabetes manage their diabetes in ways that fit their lifestyle. Participants will:

- Work with a diabetes care and education specialist to set and track goals.
- Learn how to use knowledge, skills, and tools to build confidence and emotional strength to manage diabetes.
- Practice how to fit diabetes care into all parts of their daily routine—like when and what they eat and how they solve problems.
- Find ways to get support (in person and online) from family, friends, the community, and their health care team.

People with diabetes can ask a health care provider or find a local program through the [Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists](#) or the [American Diabetes Association](#).

Reasons to Refer Patients With Diabetes to DSMES Services

- People need access to services and support to help them make the lifestyle changes required to effectively manage their diabetes.
- Additional support helps people with diabetes stay motivated, lets them know they are not alone, and can help them stay on track with their management goals.
- Better health management can help people with diabetes live longer and healthier lives. DSMES is an evidence-based diabetes management service model that can help people with diabetes prevent or delay diabetes complications.
- Participation in DSMES is cost effective. Studies show these services reduce hospital admissions and avoidable readmissions.
- DSMES participants have higher satisfaction rates with their care, improved knowledge, better treatment adherence, more positive outcomes, and strengthened quality of care.
- Diabetes care and education specialists offer personalized care that supports your treatment plan and improves your patients' self-efficacy.
- Participating in DSMES services will help your patients be more aware of and receive necessary care. They will be more likely to get routine lab work, recommended immunizations, medication adherence support, and regular care for eyes, ears, teeth, and feet.

The Importance of Health Care Providers

- Patients with diabetes need a referral from their health care provider to access DSMES services.
- Patients count on their health care provider more than any other source of information to help them manage a serious chronic condition like diabetes.
- As a health care provider, you play a vital role in helping your patients manage their diabetes by referring them to DSMES services.