

I am writing to urge you to support H.B. No 5266- An Act Concerning Medicaid coverage for Diabetes Prevention and Self- Management Education Services. I am a Nurse Practitioner and a Certified Diabetes Educator. I work at Norwalk hospital and teach patients and their families how to manage diabetes. On a daily basis, I meet with patients who have misconceptions about what it takes to control their diabetes. Many people think that as long as they don't eat sweets, that their diabetes will be fine. They do not understand the role of carbohydrates, protein , and fat in managing their diabetes. Others think that the medications that they take for diabetes will control it. People with diabetes that have not been educated have made poor decisions that have sometimes landed them in the hospital. They have skipped insulin doses or taken the wrong amounts of medications which caused their blood glucose levels to fluctuate. Diabetes management is a balance between food, exercise, medication and monitoring. I teach patients the diabetes self-management skills to help them in their decision making, improve their diabetes control, and prevent complications.

People in Connecticut with diabetes need your help. Connecticut State Medicaid does not cover Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) for people with diabetes. DSME is an American Diabetes Association Standard of Care. It is covered by Medicare and mandated in Connecticut to be covered by private insurance plans. DSME is covered by Medicaid in 31 states including New York and Massachusetts.

The number of people in Connecticut with a diagnosis of diabetes is at epidemic proportions. If these people do not get the evidence based Diabetes Self-Management Education that this disease requires, the complications caused from it are devastating and expensive.

Connecticut State Medicaid provides coverage for kidney dialysis, amputations, wound care , and for cardiovascular disease which are the leading complications caused by uncontrolled diabetes.

The day to day management for diabetes falls on the person with diabetes. They need education to make good decisions, and prevent the complications associated with diabetes. Please support H.B. No 5266 and get Diabetes Self-Management Education covered for state Medicaid patients.

Thank you

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