

**Testimony of the American Diabetes Association in Support of  
House Bill 6237 – Medicaid Coverage for Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME)**

My name is Stephen Habbe, and I am the Director for State Government Affairs and Advocacy for the American Diabetes Association. I am here to convey the Association's support for House Bill 6237 regarding Medicaid coverage for Diabetes Self-Management Education. This bill was filed to address recommendations made by the legislatively mandated Diabetes Advisory Council, of which I am a member. The Council made an interim report to the Public Health Committee on January 1<sup>st</sup> and will be making a final report later this spring.

By way of background, there are nearly 350,000 people with diabetes in Connecticut, including an estimated 70,000 people enrolled on Medicaid. And an estimated 11,000 people are newly diagnosed with diabetes each year in Connecticut. Diabetes is prevalent, and it also can be a devastating disease. It is a leading source of complications that can be costly, and disabling or deadly – including blindness, kidney failure, lower limb amputations, heart disease, and stroke.

House Bill 6237 seeks to address a critical care gap by establishing Medicaid coverage for Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME), also known as Diabetes Self-Management Training (DSMT). Diabetes Self-Management Education prepares people with diabetes to properly self-manage their diabetes given the vital importance of diabetes self-care to ensure healthy outcomes. Through this education the patient is better equipped to make daily decisions balancing food, physical activity and medications, and in performing related care activities to keep blood glucose levels within a specified range.

The Association views DSME as a critical, evidence-based service to keep people with diabetes healthy. DSME is recommended in the Association's Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes, which are widely referenced in the medical community. Diabetes Self-Management Education is cost effective and is already widely reimbursed among other insurers, including commercial plans, Medicare, and most Medicaid programs throughout the country, including in neighboring New York and Massachusetts. But it's not covered by Medicaid in Connecticut.

Legislatures across the country are revisiting what they are doing to turn the tide on diabetes given the devastating scope of this disease. The Association would appreciate the Committee's support for House Bill 6237 to fill this gaping hole in Connecticut's Medicaid coverage for diabetes. Thank you for your consideration.

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**Diabetes Information**

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**The Mission of the American**

Diabetes Association is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.