

Guidance on the use of patient-education models for diabetes

- 1.1 It is recommended that structured patient education is made available to all people with diabetes at the time of initial diagnosis and then as required on an ongoing basis, based on a formal, regular assessment of need.
- 1.2 There is insufficient evidence currently available to recommend a specific type of education or provide guidance on the setting for, or frequency of, sessions. However, to achieve maximum effectiveness some principles of good practice are clear:
- educational interventions should reflect established principles of adult learning
 - education should be provided by an appropriately trained multidisciplinary team to groups of people with diabetes, unless group work is considered unsuitable for an individual
 - sessions should be accessible to the broadest range of people, taking into account culture, ethnicity, disability and geographical issues, and could be held either in the community or at a local diabetes centre
 - educational programmes should use a variety of techniques to promote active learning (engaging individuals in the process of learning and relating the content of programmes to personal experience), adapted wherever possible to meet the different needs, personal choices and learning styles of people with diabetes, and should be integrated into routine diabetes care over the longer term.
- 1.3 Multidisciplinary teams providing education should include, as a minimum, a diabetes specialist nurse (or a practice nurse with experience in diabetes) who has knowledge of the principles of patient education and a dietitian. Although not formally assessed in this appraisal, input from other disciplines, such as podiatry, has potential value. The composition of the team and the way that members interact may vary between programmes, but team functioning should be tailored to the needs of different groups of people with diabetes.
- 1.4 It is considered that the Dose Adjustment for Normal Eating (DAFNE) programme may be a suitable option for individuals with type 1 diabetes, being one means of enabling people to self-manage this condition.