

Diabetes education for adults advocacy pack



Reviewed: December 2016

DiABETES UK
KNOW DIABETES. FIGHT DIABETES.

1 Getting a place on a diabetes education course

This pack sets out your rights and explains what you can do if you experience difficulties getting on a diabetes education course.

What are diabetes education courses?

Diabetes education courses aim to help you take control of your diabetes and live a full and healthy life. There are different courses for Type 1 diabetes and Type 2 diabetes and exactly what you'll learn depends on which one you go on. The courses are taught in groups and led by healthcare professionals or trained educators who might also be living with diabetes. Each course should help you improve your diabetes management skills and let you ask questions and meet other people living with diabetes.

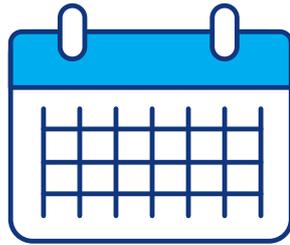


The most commonly available courses are:

Course	Duration	Details
DESMOND (Diabetes Education and Self-Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed), for adults with Type 2 diabetes www.desmond-project.org.uk	Six hours, usually in one day or half day formats.	Helps participants understand their diabetes, including risk factors and complications, make food choices and take control. Available in Punjabi, Gujarati, Urdu or Bengali in some areas.
X-PERT Diabetes Programme , for adults with Type 2 diabetes www.xperthealth.org.uk	Two and a half hour sessions delivered over six weeks, plus annual follow up session.	Participants explore how diabetes affects their body and how lifestyle changes can improve their diabetes control.
DAFNE (Dose Adjustment For Normal Eating), for adults with Type 1 diabetes www.dafne.uk.com	Five day training course, plus follow up session at eight weeks.	Gives people the skills necessary to estimate the amount of carbohydrate in each meal and inject the right dose of insulin, so that they can fit diabetes into their own lifestyle.

There are also locally designed courses in some areas. Your healthcare professional team should be able to tell you what is available in your area.

When should I be offered the chance to go on a diabetes education course?



Everyone with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes should have the chance to go on a diabetes education course that is right for them.

People with Type 1 diabetes should be offered a place on a course between six and 12 months after being diagnosed. If you have had Type 1 diabetes for longer but haven't yet been on a course, you should be offered a place at any point that is suitable for you. Every year you and your diabetes team should check what help you need to manage your diabetes well.

People with Type 2 diabetes should be offered a place on a course shortly after diagnosis. If you have Type 2 diabetes, you and your diabetes team should talk about whether you need to go on a course during your annual review.



What do I need to do to go on a course?

Ask. But it does depend on the course and your local area. For some courses, you can get a place by applying yourself and for others your healthcare professional (like your GP, practice nurse or diabetes consultant) will have to refer you. You can find out whether you can book your own place on a course by asking your local course providers or NHS decision makers. But first ask your diabetes team if they can get you on a course.

Local **Clinical Commissioning Groups** are responsible for making health decisions about the NHS across England. In Scotland, **NHS Boards** have this responsibility and in Wales, **Local Health Boards** do. In Northern Ireland, it's down to **Health and Social Care Trusts**.

What if there are no courses in my area?

If there are no courses in your area, you may want to make a healthcare complaint. Our **Making a Complaint About Healthcare Advocacy Pack** will help you do this. You can also write to your local NHS decision makers directly.

Campaign with us for more education

Our Taking Control campaign is fighting to make sure everyone is able to go on an education course right for them. You can find information, advice and template letters to help you fight for more education courses on our website at www.diabetes.org.uk/taking-control

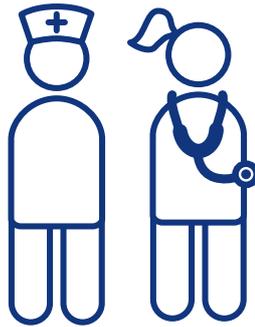
What if my healthcare professional doesn't think I need to attend a course?

Evidence shows that diabetes education improves people's health and reduces their risk of serious complications. National guidelines set out what care everyone with diabetes is entitled to and they all include being able to go on a diabetes education course. If your healthcare professional doesn't think you need to attend a course, explain to them why you feel you need to go on one, how it would help and also that these courses are recommended in national guidelines.

In **England** and **Wales** the national guidelines say that education courses are an essential part of diabetes care and should be offered to **all** people with diabetes. If you were not offered a course around the time of diagnosis, you should be allowed to go at any time that is good for you. The guidelines also say that at your annual review you should be able to talk about the things you need to help you look after your diabetes. If you believe going on another course or a refresher would help, then ask your healthcare professional.

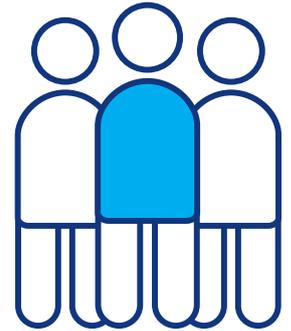
National guidelines in **Scotland** say that education courses should be offered to all adults with Type 2 diabetes and adults with Type 1 diabetes who are experiencing problems with hypoglycaemia (hypos) or failing to achieve glycaemic targets (HbA1c). Scotland's Diabetes Improvement Plan commits to offering education courses to all adults with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes 12 months after diagnosis.

In **Northern Ireland**, the Diabetes Strategic Framework says, "Structured diabetes education to support self-management should be a core element of diabetes care".



Can I take somebody with me?

The national guidelines for England and Wales say that education should be offered to the carers of people with diabetes. Courses will also often allow you to bring a friend, family member or partner along with you, so do ask your course provider or healthcare professional if this is possible.



What if I am unable or unwilling to attend a course?

In England and Wales the guidelines say that people who aren't able or don't want to attend an education course should be offered an alternative of an equal standard. The guidelines do not say what form this should take, but it is likely to involve one-to-one coaching.

For other learning and support options take a look at Section 3 of this pack on page 8.

2 Taking time off work to attend a diabetes education course

Taking time off work to go on a course

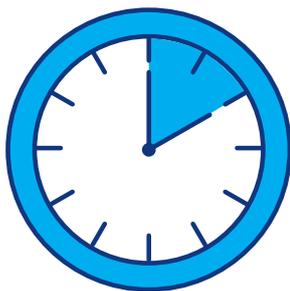
If you have not already done so, the first step is to have a conversation with your employer about your diabetes. Tell them that you consider yourself to come under the Equality Act's disability definition. Explain that a diabetes education course is an essential part of your diabetes care and that you believe time off to go on a course to be a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act.

It will also be helpful to explain the benefits of attending to your employer. In particular it may be helpful to explain that better diabetes management could mean less time off work due to sickness related to your diabetes. By achieving better diabetes management this will also reduce your risk of complications, which may otherwise cause you to take time off work.

It may also be helpful to ask your healthcare professional to write a letter which outlines the benefits and explains it is a vital part of your diabetes care.

The next pages explain more about the Equality Act and how that relates to diabetes and taking time off for a diabetes course.

Should your employer not allow you time off we can offer you support in what to do next. Please refer to our Employment and Diabetes Advocacy Pack to find out more. https://www.diabetes.org.uk/How_we_help/Helpline/Your-rights/



Why you have the right to time off to go on a course

There are different reasons why your work should let you attend a course like your statutory rights, which is when the law gives you the right to time off in certain circumstances. Your right to time off work can also come from your contract of employment. The right to time off work does not always mean you will be paid for it.

Your contract of employment can sometimes give you extra rights, over and above what the law says. So make sure you check your contract. A contract of employment does not simply mean your written contract but also anything that has been agreed verbally or has been established because of what has happened before.



In England, Scotland and Wales, under the Equality Act 2010, if you have a disability your employer has a duty to make reasonable adjustments in order to prevent you from being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

If your employer doesn't do this it means they have broken the law by discriminating against you because of your disability. In Northern Ireland similar rights are provided for under the Disability Discrimination Act (2006).

The definition of disability under the Act is not reliant on a specific diagnosis. What is important is the effect of the health condition on the individual.

Are people with diabetes classed as having a disability?

The law doesn't specify precisely what health conditions are considered a disability. Instead it is the effect a health condition has on each person.

The Equality Act 2010 describes a disability as:

“A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment and this impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

The term substantial doesn't mean that a person is unable to carry out the activity at all. If the person can carry out the activity more slowly than usual or only for short periods of time then this would be considered to be a substantial effect as the effect must be more than minor or trivial.

For an impairment to be considered long-term the effect of must have lasted, or be likely to last, a minimum of 12 months.

If a person is taking medication to treat their condition then the effect of not taking their medication would be taken into account.

The law describes a substantial disadvantage as a disadvantage that is more than minor or trivial.

What this means for people with diabetes

Whether or not diabetes has a substantial adverse effect is decided by looking at what the effects of the condition would be if someone didn't take their medication, or follow the prescribed diet⁴. Because of this people with Type 1 diabetes will always be considered to have a disability. It is not as clear for people with Type 2 but often they will be covered by the act.

An auxiliary aid and/or service is defined as a particular piece of equipment, an aid or assistance that will help you to carry out your work. This could include providing special equipment or modifying existing equipment – for example, providing adapted desks, chairs or keyboards but it could also include providing extra support, ie extra training.



What is a reasonable adjustment?

The law requires employers to make reasonable adjustments in three areas if a person is put at substantial disadvantage because of their disability compared to someone without a disability.

The first takes into account how a disability might affect a person in the workplace around things like workload, targets, responsibilities, duties, working hours, leave, sick leave and recruitment.

Employers also might have to make physical changes to your work place like providing ramps, making doorways wider rearranging the office to make it more accessible.

Finally employers might have to provide what is known as an auxiliary aid. This means providing special or modified equipment, giving extra training or even helping someone with a support worker if needed.

Is the adjustment requested reasonable?

The law does not specify exactly what would be considered to be a reasonable adjustment as the type of adjustment a person may need depends on their individual needs.

Examples of reasonable adjustments can include, but are not limited to:

- Changing working times.
- Frequency of breaks.
- Allowing time off to attend medical appointments.
- Alterations to work premises/equipment.
- Allowing time off work to attend education courses

Factors which are particularly relevant when considering whether an adjustment is reasonable are:

- The extent to which the adjustment would prevent the disadvantage.
- How practical it is for the employer to make the adjustment.
- The employer's financial and other resources.
- Whether there is any available financial or other assistance to make the adjustment.
- The cost of the adjustment.
- The amount of disruption the adjustment may cause.
- The cost of not making the adjustment.

What is reasonable will vary from one situation to another and will depend on the circumstances of both the person with the disability and the employer.

Whether or not an employer has failed to make a reasonable adjustment under the act is a decision that ultimately lies with an employment tribunal. An employment tribunal will apply a test to reach its own decision as to what steps were reasonable and justified.

Your employer is under no duty to make a reasonable adjustment if they don't know of your disability and can't be reasonably expected to know that you have a disability. So, make sure you tell them about your diabetes.

3 Other learning and support options

We think everyone should attend a face-to-face diabetes education course as soon as they're ready. But we know that's not possible for everyone. If you can't go on a course just yet there are lots of other ways to get support and learn more about your diabetes.

Diabetes UK support

Call our helpline

Our Helpline is staffed by trained counsellors who really know diabetes. They can help you with information about diabetes, take the time to talk things through and explore any emotional, social, psychological or practical difficulties. For more information and support about your rights and how to get on a diabetes education course they're the people to call.



Call: 0345 123 2399*

Monday to Friday, 9am–7pm*

Email: helpline@diabetes.org.uk

Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/helpline

If you're in Scotland

Call: 0141 212 8710*

Monday to Friday, 9am–7pm.

Email: helpline.scotland@diabetes.org.uk

Join our online communities

Our online Support Forum and Facebook and Twitter communities are a great place to meet other people with diabetes. Morning, noon and night you'll find loads of people sharing their experiences, offering each other support offering plenty of advice about life with diabetes.



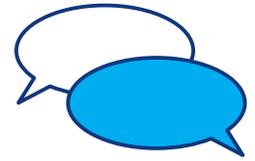
Web: forum.diabetes.org.uk

Join a local support group

The members of our 380 support groups up and down the UK have been there, down that and got the Diabetes UK t-shirt. They normally meet once a month to share experiences, offer support and learn more about diabetes. Find your local group on our website.

Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/groups

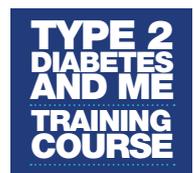
Call: 0345 123 2399*



Type 2 Diabetes and Me

Our free interactive online tool helps people with Type 2 diabetes understand and manage their condition well. It gives people the chance to learn what they want when they want. It was developed by Diabetes UK, in partnership with Bupa.

Web: www.type2diabetesandme.co.uk



Type 1 Events

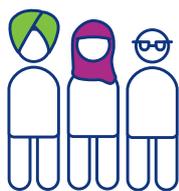
Our events for children, teenagers, adults and families have run for over 80 years and are designed to make sure diabetes holds no one back. The events are about sharing experiences, building confidence and creating more freedom to live with diabetes.

Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/type-1-events



Join Diabetes Voices

Diabetes Voices are members of the public who campaign with us to improvements in diabetes services and care across the UK. If you would like to become a Diabetes Voice, or for more information, get in touch.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk/voices

Email: diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk

Call: 0345 123 2399*

For help making a complaint

If you're unhappy with any of the care you've received we've got all the information and advice you'll need on our website in our

Making A Complaint About Healthcare Advocacy Pack.



Call: 0345 123 2399* (ask to have the pack sent out to you).

Find out more on our website

We've got loads of free information, advice, tips and guides on our website to help you live well with diabetes. If you prefer you can also order printed magazines and information leaflets from our online shop.



Web: www.diabetes.org.uk

Web: shop.diabetes.org.uk

Call: 0345 123 2399*

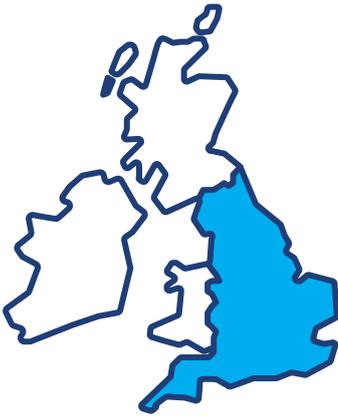
Other support

BERTIE online

BERTIE online is an e-learning programme that supports people with Type 1 to understand and manage their diabetes in a way that suits them. It has information on insulin, carb counting, pumps and managing diabetes in real life. It includes a section specifically for young adults, covering topics like exam stress, moving out, relationships and alcohol.

Web: www.bertieonline.org.uk

4 Further support



In England

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can help you solve problems or deal with any concerns when you're using the NHS in England. They can give you information about the NHS complaints procedure and how to get independent help if you decide you want to make a complaint.

More information on PALS can be found on the NHS Choices website, which also has a search tool to find the nearest PALS in your area

Web: www.nhs.uk/chq/Pages/1082.aspx?CategoryID=68

You can also ask your GP surgery or hospital for details of your nearest PALS.

NHS Complaints Advocacy

The NHS Complaints Advocacy Service is a free and independent service that can help you make a complaint about an NHS service. Their website has information on how to make a complaint and the support they can provide. They also have a self-help pack which you can request or download.

Web: nhscomplaintsadvocacy.org

Email: nhscomplaints@voiceability.org

Call: 0300 330 5454 (helpline)

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO)

The PHSO make final decisions on complaints that have not been resolved by the NHS in England and UK government departments and other public organisations.

Address: The Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London SW1P 4QP.

Web: www.ombudsman.org.uk

Email: phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk

Call: 0345 015 4033 (Complaints helpline)

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The CQC works to make sure that hospitals, care homes, dental and GP surgeries, and all other care services in England provide people with safe, effective, compassionate and high-quality care, and encourage them to make improvements. They inspect services and publish the results on their website to help people make better decisions about the care they receive.

Web: www.cqc.org.uk

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk or using their online form www.cqc.org.uk/home/contact-us/contact-us-using-our-online-form

Call: 03000 61 61 61



In Scotland

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

In Scotland the CAB is tasked with helping people making complaints about healthcare through its Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS). Contact your local CAB for more information.

Web: www.cas.org.uk/about-us/partnerships-services/cab-service-partners/patient-advice-and-support-service

Call: 0808 800 9060

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about the NHS in. To make a complaint to the SPSO you must fill in a complaint form. You can do this online or you can order a paper form by phone.

Address: SPSO, Freepost EH641, Edinburgh EH3 0BR.

Web: www.spsso.org.uk

Call: 0800 377 7330 (Advice line)



In Wales

Community Health Council (CHC) (Wales only)

Your local CHC can give you free impartial advice and help with making a complaint about healthcare in Wales. To find details of your local CHC contact the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales.

Web: www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/899/home

Email: enquiries@waleschc.org.uk

Call: 02920 235 558

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOfW)

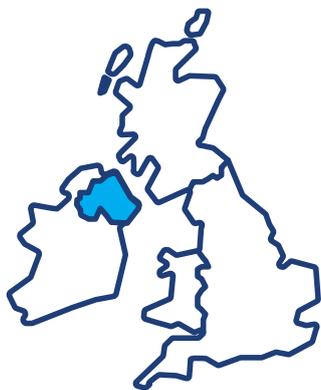
The PSOfW is the organisation that looks into complaints about the health service and other public bodies in Wales.

Address: Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, 1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ.

Web: www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Email: ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk

Call: 0300 790 0203



In
Northern Ireland



Across the UK

Patient and Client Council (PCC) (Northern Ireland only)

The PCC offers free impartial advice and help to people making a complaint about healthcare in Northern Ireland.

Web: www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net

Email: info.pcc@hscni.net

Call: 0800 917 0222

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO)

NIPSO reviews complaints about the health service in Northern Ireland fairly and independently.

Address: The Ombudsman, Freepost BEL 1478, Belfast BT1 6BR.

Web: <https://nipso.org.uk/nipso/>

Email: ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk

Call: 02890 233821 or 0800 34 34 24 (freephone)

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Across the UK the CAB may be able to help with any complaints you have about the health service. There are offices all across the UK and you can find You can find your local CAB office in the phone book or on their website.

Web: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Web: www.adviceguide.org.uk (online advice)

England: 03444 111 444

Scotland: 0808 800 9060

Wales: 03444 77 20 20

Northern Ireland: 028 9023 1120

The Patients Association

The Patients Association advocates for better access to accurate and independent information for patients and the public. It fights for equal access to high quality healthcare for patients and the right for patients to be involved in all aspects of decision making regarding their healthcare. They have a helpline for concerns and queries about any aspect of the healthcare system.

Web: www.patients-association.org.uk

Email: helpline@patients-association.com

Telephone: 0845 608 4455 or 020 8423 9111

References

- 1 NICE (2015). NG17: *Type 1 diabetes in adults: diagnosis and management*; NG28 (2015). *Type 2 diabetes in adults: management*
- 2 SIGN (2010). 116: *Management of diabetes. A national clinical guideline*
- 3 Scottish Government (2014). *The Diabetes Improvement Plan*
- 4 Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (2016). *Diabetes Strategic Framework*
- 5 Office for Disability Issues, Equality Act 2010 Guidance. *Guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability*

For more information about diabetes education for children and their rights please call or email our Helpline.