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ADMINISTRATIVE TIDBITS

I’m so happy to share with you this edition’s “Facilitator Education” section, contributed by Marci Butcher. A fellow Montanan, Marci was selected to be the National Diabetes Educator of the Year by the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE). She is a dietitian and a certified diabetes educator (CDE), and she has been integral in diabetes education across the state through her years of work in the field. Marci works with the Department of Public Health and Human Services’ Montana Diabetes Program and with Mountain-Pacific Quality Health.

November is National Diabetes Month, and although the holiday season may be a difficult time to schedule a series of classes, using this national observance is a great way to get folks excited about taking control of their diabetes! You can also take advantage of the approaching new year. Schedule a class and encourage folks to sign up as a New Year’s resolution. We have six classes scheduled in 2018 so far. As new classes are scheduled, we will email those facilitators an electronic copy of the eighth edition of the Diabetes Empowerment Education Program (DEEP)™ curriculum.

Of note: Because of you and your participation, 348 Montanans with Medicare who live with diabetes have graduated from DEEP! Great job, everyone! Your engagement is vital to the success of this program.

Thank you for all you do, and happy holidays!
Stephanie Paugh, PharmD

OURS DEEP IMPACT

DEEP participants are enjoying your classes! Here is what some Montanans had to say about you and DEEP:

• I have never been to a diabetes educator, but because of these classes, I see how important a diabetes educator is to my health.
• Everything I wondered about was answered. I learned so much. Thank you!
• They listen to me, explain things clearly. I learned way more than I thought I would.
• The material we covered had many answers to questions I didn’t know I had.
• My favorite part of the class was [the facilitator] explaining through all the lessons.

Stephanie Paugh, PharmD
November is American Diabetes Month. So you might be thinking, *What kind of message should I use to increase diabetes awareness in my community?* Many diabetes professionals agree there is no good, cohesive messaging. There are strong messages about other health conditions such as breast cancer, and rightfully so! The “pink ribbon” is a wonderful message of strength. However, diabetes does not have a ribbon nor a clear national message.

**The Muddled Diabetes Message**

Current diabetes messaging can involve blaming people with diabetes for their condition or shaming them for not properly taking care of their health. These messages are not helpful and can actually be harmful. There is a dire need for messaging that is strength-based, empowering, nonjudgmental, respectful, inclusive and that imparts hope.

Many organizations serve people with diabetes, but they do not share a color to globally represent the disease. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) uses red to represent blood and blood sugar, which are what most people think about when it comes to diabetes. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) uses a blue circle to represent connecting diabetes advocates and to promote awareness on World Diabetes Day, which is November 14, the birthday of co-discoverer of insulin Sir Frederick Banting.

Not only are different colors associated with diabetes awareness, but messages vary, too. This makes it difficult to refine a consistent message during American Diabetes Month. The ADA’s message this year is “There’s a hero inside you,” while the IDF is emphasizing women with “Our right to a healthy future.” The National Diabetes Education Program (part of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases) is touting “You are the center of your diabetes care team.”

With all the different diabetes messaging, what is the most important message for your community and DEEP classes? Just remember this: Whatever you choose, make sure it is empowering, positive, person-centered and hopeful, and keep it free from judgement, shame and blame.

**The Language of Diabetes**

The American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) and the ADA have new guidance about what language to use when working with people with diabetes and their support systems. What we say has an impact on motivation, behaviors and outcomes. Using empowering language can help people with diabetes engage in the positive self-management of their condition.

For example, asking “Are you a diabetic?” labels the person as his/her disease. People live full, active lives, and diabetes is not who they are. It is a condition they have to manage and live with the best they can. Instead, we should ask, “Do you have diabetes,” a more person-centered question. You can learn more about “speaking the language of diabetes” on AADE’s website.

As we commemorate American Diabetes Month and World Diabetes Day this month, please know that, as DEEP facilitators, your words and messages matter. You make a difference every day by giving your class participants the knowledge and skills to help them self-manage their diabetes and help them feel supported and empowered. Thank you for your dedication and for making such a meaningful difference in your communities.

**THE MESSAGING SURROUNDING DIABETES: DOES IT REALLY MATTER?**

Written by Marci Butcher, RD, CDE

In honor of American Diabetes Month and the upcoming holiday season, here are some tools you can share with your class participants.

- **AADE’s Holiday Season Eating Tips for People with Diabetes**
- **AADE’s Tips for Travelling**
- **AADE’s Top 5 Questions for Your Diabetes Team**
Q: What is your background before becoming a DEEP facilitator?
A: I started working for Montana State University Extension, and DEEP was the first program outside 4H I started with. Prior to working for MSU Extension, I was a high school agriculture teacher and FFA advisor in both Washington and Montana.

Q: What do you like most about being a DEEP facilitator?
A: I really enjoy getting to know everyone in my class. The participants seem to really enjoy the class. I was amazed at how little some people know about diabetes and how much they will share with the class—a true sign of investment and willingness to learn. I love being able to help people understand what they have been diagnosed with and what they can do to slow the process or manage their lives on a daily basis.

Q: What are some tips you have learned while facilitating DEEP that you would share with your fellow facilitators?
A: If you show an investment in the class, so will your participants. I started my first class by telling everyone that my interest in diabetes is because of my family members who are living with diabetes and wanting to understand more about what diabetes is. Relax and enjoy what you are doing and make those personal connections with your participants.

Q: What do you think is the most effective method for advertising DEEP classes?
A: Everyone in my current class signed up because of two things: either they read about the class in the local newspaper, or they were referred through their doctor’s office. The diabetes educator at the local hospital has been a wonderful asset in this class. She has helped get word to the patients she directly works with as well as talked to local doctor’s offices. Now that the class has started, I will be more confident in going to the doctor’s offices in town to talk to them before doing my next set of classes.

Q: What have you heard from your participants about the DEEP class?
A: So far everyone has been very positive about what they are learning. This group of participants has been the perfect first class. They love learning about diabetes and are so willing to share. While it is a lot of information to get out, it’s in smaller doses and easy to understand. The participants have been so thankful.

UPCOMING DEEP CLASSES IN MONTANA

- Bullhook Community Health Center
  Havre | Katherine Shrauger
  Mondays | Nov. 27 – Jan. 15
  12:30 to 1:30 PM

- Ag Worker Health and Services
  Lolo | Connie Ellen
  Mondays | Jan. 8 – Feb. 12
  5:15 to 6:15 PM

- The Living Center in the Chapel
  Stevensville | Kayla Paddock
  Wednesdays | Jan. 10 – Feb. 14
  4:00 to 5:30 PM

- St. Francis Church | Hamilton
  Kayla Paddock
  Thursdays | Jan. 11 – Feb. 15
  1:00 to 2:30 PM

- Powder River County Election Room | Broadus
  Julie Riley
  Tuesdays | Jan. 23 – Feb. 27
  12:00 to 2:00 PM

- MSU Extension Office | Hardin
  Holly Jay
  Tuesdays | Feb. 27 – Apr. 24
  6:30 to 8:30 PM

SHARE YOUR DEEP SUCCESSES

What positive things are happening in your classes? Is one participant already showing improvement or doing something awesome to improve his/her health? What are your participants saying about DEEP? We would like to include your successes in this newsletter! Please share them with us! Contact Melonie Van Dyke at mvandyke@mpqhf.org or call our Helena office at (406) 443-4020 or 1-800-497-8232 (toll free).