



## **Support the Expanding Access to Diabetes Self-Management Training (DSMT) Act (H.R. 1840/S. 814)**

In March 2019, the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE) and its coalition partners, worked with Representatives Tom Reed (R-NY) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Senators Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) to introduce the Expanding Access to Diabetes Self-Management Training (DSMT) Act. The legislation amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to improve access to outpatient DSMT services under the Medicare program.

### **The Problem**

DSMT is an evidence-based service that teaches people with diabetes how to self-manage the disease to live better and reduce their risk of diabetes-related complications. DSMT has been a covered benefit under Medicare for more than 20 years. Despite the undisputed benefits of DSMT for people with diabetes – lower hemoglobin A1C, weight loss, improved quality of life, healthy coping skills and reduced healthcare costs – only an estimated 5 percent of Medicare beneficiaries with newly diagnosed diabetes use DSMT services.<sup>12</sup>

### **How Does H.R. 1840/S. 814 Improve Access to DSMT services?**

H.R. 1840/S. 814 make critical and necessary changes to help increase access to the DSMT benefit to better meet the needs of Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes. Specifically, the legislation--

- ❖ Allows the initial 10 hours of DSMT to remain available until fully used;
- ❖ Covers an additional 6 hours of DSMT services during the first year and in subsequent years, if medically necessary;
- ❖ Permits DSMT and Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) services to be provided on the same day;
- ❖ Excludes DSMT services from Part B cost-sharing and deductible requirements;
- ❖ Permits physicians and qualified nonphysician practitioners (i.e., podiatrists, emergency department providers, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, or clinical nurse specialists) working in coordination with a treating physician or qualified nonphysician to refer for DSMT services;
- ❖ Revises the Medicare Benefit Policy Manual to ensure that hospital outpatient departments can provide DSMT services in community-based locations; and
- ❖ Establishes a 2-year demonstration program for the coverage of virtual DSMT under the Medicare program.

### **Action Request**

AADE needs the help of all diabetes educators and people with diabetes to pass this legislation. Here are some things you can do today to help advance the Expanding Access to DSMT Act.

- ✓ **Educate yourself on the issues.**
  - Visit AADE's website at [www.diabeteseducator.org/advocacy](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/advocacy) for more information on the bill, including an issue brief summarizing the key components of the legislation.
- ✓ **Find your Congressional Representatives**
  - Visit [www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow), type in your address, and instantly find your representatives.

<sup>1</sup> American Diabetes Association. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes—2017. *Diabetes Care* 2017; 40 (Suppl.1): S3

<sup>2</sup> Strawbridge LM, Lloyd JT, Meadow A, et al. Use of Medicare's diabetes self-management training benefit. *Health Education Behavior* 2015; 42: 530-8.



✓ **Contact your Congressional Representatives**

- **Send a letter:** Take 2 minutes (or less) and send a letter to your representative via AADE Legislative Action Center at [www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow). We have a prepared letter on the site that’s ready to send!
- **Make a phone call or create a social media post.** Once you’ve identified your congressional representatives, you can easily make a phone call, Tweet, or use Facebook to contact your legislator. This can all be done on the same site: [www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow](http://www.diabeteseducator.org/actnow)
- **Schedule a meeting:** You don’t have to travel to meet with your representatives. All members of Congress have offices in their home districts to ensure they are accessible to their constituents. Get a group of colleagues together and schedule a meeting in the district office. AADE advocacy staff is here to help with scheduling or preparing for your meeting if you have any questions. AADE’s Legislative Action Center also lists the office contact information for each elected official.
- **Talk about what you know:** AADE has talking points available to discuss the legislation, but we encourage you to share your personal stories. How do you see these changes helping people with diabetes? What challenges do you currently face?

✓ **Communicate**

- Post your advocacy story to the Advocacy Forum on My AADE Network. Help inspire others to take action!
- Share your experience on social media.
- Tweet at your congressional representatives to thank them for their support.
- Let AADE know what you’ve been doing! Advocacy staff is here to help.

✓ **Get involved as a CB**

- Consider an advocacy challenge or advocacy day within your CB to encourage diabetes educators in your state to send letter or make calls.
- Join together to schedule a meeting in the district. No need to advocate alone!
- Set a goal of contacting each congressional representative in the state.

✓ **Other tips**

- Visit the website of your congressional representatives. Sign-up for their newsletter or mailing list to stay updated on the issues and find out more about local events.
- Attend a town hall or local event.
- Invited your congressional representative or their staff to visit you in your practice setting.