

From atom Alliance, Kentucky's QIN-QIO: Everyone With Diabetes Counts

Nearly one-third of adults 65 years and older in the United States have diabetes, according to the National Institutes of Health. It is the most common cause of blindness, kidney failure, and amputations in adults and a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. Diabetes self-management education (DSME) is a proven intervention for empowering people with diabetes (and their family or caregivers) to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively engage with their health care providers and to improve the quality of their lives.

Quality Innovation Network – Quality Improvement Organizations (QIN-QIOs), such as atom Alliance in Kentucky, are collaborating with various organizations to provide DSME classes. These free classes are targeted to Medicare beneficiaries living with diabetes and pre-diabetes and offer an opportunity to participate in sessions that will teach them more about controlling, preventing, or delaying diabetes. Families and caregivers of diabetics and pre-diabetics also are encouraged to attend these classes.

Ethnic and racial minorities, as well as residents in rural areas, have a higher prevalence of diabetes. Although all Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes or pre-diabetes are welcome to attend DSME classes, we are especially focusing education toward the following populations.

- ✓ African-American
- ✓ Hispanic/Latino
- ✓ American Indian/Native American
- ✓ Asian/Pacific Islander
- ✓ Any race/ethnicity living in rural areas

The DSME classes are two-hour sessions held once a week for six weeks and are designed to:

- ✓ **Educate** beneficiaries on how to best control their blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels;
- ✓ **Empower** beneficiaries to establish relationships with primary care providers;
- ✓ **Encourage** better nutrition and regular exercise;
- ✓ **Encourage** lifestyle changes that lead to the reduction in the number of limb amputations and other complications; and
- ✓ **Express** the importance of developing support networks of family, friends, and existing community-based social services.

If you are interested in partnering with us to offer these free diabetes classes to your Medicare beneficiary stakeholders with diabetes and pre-diabetes in our target population, please contact Nancy Semrau, QI Advisor, at nancy.semrau@area-g.hcqis.org.

Formed as a partnership between three leading healthcare consultancies, atom Alliance is working under contract to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) throughout Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee to improve quality and achieve better outcomes in health and healthcare and at lower costs for the patients and communities we serve. Learn more at www.atomAlliance.org.