

Information for adults who use NHS services for diabetes

The NICE quality standard for diabetes in adults sets out what high-quality care in the NHS in England should include, so that the best care can be offered to people with diabetes using NHS services in England.

NICE quality standard for diabetes in adults

The quality standard on diabetes is made up of 13 statements that describe high-quality care for patients. These statements are about the best care you should receive and are summarised below.

1. People with diabetes and/or their carers receive a diabetes education course to suit their needs that is delivered by trained staff. A healthcare professional should check every year whether the person would find further diabetes education useful, and diabetes education should continue to be available.
2. People with diabetes are given advice on diet and exercise from a trained healthcare professional or as part of their diabetes education course.
3. People with diabetes are involved in annual planning for their own care which includes agreeing on the best way to manage their diabetes and setting personal goals.
4. People with diabetes agree a target for HbA_{1c} (a measure of blood sugar over the past 2–3 months), usually between 48 mmol/mol and 58 mmol/mol (6.5% and 7.5%), with their healthcare professional, and have their treatment reviewed continuously to help avoid low blood sugar (hypoglycaemia).

5. People with diabetes agree with their healthcare professional to start, review and stop medications to lower blood glucose, blood pressure, and blood lipids (blood fats).
6. People with diabetes who need insulin receive help and support from trained healthcare professionals, including help with starting on insulin and managing their treatment. This should include advice on adjusting the dose of insulin according to their blood sugar levels.
7. Women of childbearing age who have diabetes are regularly given advice about the benefits of controlling their blood sugar before a pregnancy, and any risks such as medication that might harm an unborn baby. Women with diabetes who are planning a pregnancy are offered care leading up to the pregnancy. Women with diabetes who are not planning a pregnancy are offered advice on contraception.
8. People with diabetes are checked for additional health problems associated with diabetes (for example, eye, nerve or kidney damage, cardiovascular disease, fatty deposits in the blood vessels or sexual problems), and for the risk of developing these problems. Any risks or problems identified are properly managed.
9. People with diabetes are checked for psychological problems (such as depression, anxiety, fear of low blood sugar, eating disorders and problems coping with the diagnosis) and any problems are properly managed.
10. People with diabetes who have foot ulcers, or are at risk of developing foot ulcers, have regular check-ups from a team specialising in foot protection, and are seen and treated by a specialist healthcare team within 24 hours if they have foot problems needing urgent medical attention.

11. People with diabetes who are admitted to hospital are cared for by trained staff, including a specialist diabetes team if needed, and are given the choice of self-monitoring their blood sugar levels and, for those on insulin therapy, managing their own insulin.
12. People with diabetes admitted to hospital with diabetic ketoacidosis (a serious condition caused by a shortage of insulin) receive information and psychological support from a specialist diabetes team before and after they leave hospital.
13. People with diabetes are seen by a specialist diabetes team for advice and support after experiencing hypoglycaemia needing medical attention (for example from a GP, paramedic, accident and emergency department, or out-of-hours services).

Your care

In the NHS, patients and healthcare professionals have rights and responsibilities as set out in the NHS Constitution (www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/NHSConstitution/index.htm). All NICE quality standards are written to reflect these. You have the right to be involved in discussions and make informed decisions about your treatment and care with your healthcare team. Your choices are important and healthcare professionals should support these wherever possible. You should be treated with dignity and respect.

Information from NICE about diabetes

The full quality standard on diabetes, written for healthcare professionals, is available from www.nice.org.uk.

NICE also produces guidance (advice) for the NHS in England and Wales about preventing, diagnosing and treating medical conditions, based on the best available evidence.

NICE has produced guidance on:

- managing diabetic foot problems in hospital, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG119
- managing type 2 diabetes, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG87
- diabetes in pregnancy, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG63
- diagnosing and managing type 1 diabetes in children, young people and adults, available from www.nice.org.uk/CG15
- preventing and managing foot problems in type 2 diabetes, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG10

The guidance was used, along with other sources of information, to develop this quality standard.

NICE has also produced information for patients and carers about the care and treatment recommended in the NICE guidance on:

- managing diabetic foot problems in hospital, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG119/PublicInfo
- managing type 2 diabetes, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG87/PublicInfo
- diabetes in pregnancy, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG63/PublicInfo

- diagnosing and managing type 1 diabetes in children, young people and adults, available from www.nice.org.uk/CG15/PublicInfo
- preventing and managing foot problems in type 2 diabetes, available from www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG10/PublicInfo

They are written to help patients, their families and carers to understand the care and treatment options that should be available in the NHS.

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