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Private practice diabetes education: What role does it have in providing a holistic model of diabetes care in Far North Queensland, Australia

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Abstract

Diabetes is a condition synonymous with complexities. Expert clinical support and guidance for clients with diabetes can assist in reducing or even preventing such complexities from developing. These complexities can range from social, emotional, cultural, physical, to psychological. Individual differences among clients living with Diabetes, combined with the progressive nature of the disease changes; means that the '*one size fits all approach'* does not work.At O'Brien Healthcare, Cairns, Australia clients are managed via a holistic model of care which has been specifically developed to target diabetes and its complexities.This model dictates that an initial one hour consultation provides a solid foundation to buildtrust andis a platform to gauge and balance client needs.

The Credentialled Diabetes Educator (CDE) role is pivotal in establishing priorities with clients, facilitating care pathways and building meaningful rapport. The CDE is promoted as being the first person referred to by the Medical Doctor when a client is initially diagnosed with diabetes. This role allows the Doctor and CDE to work as a team.The CDE uses expertise to address the complexities of Diabetes, ensure client understanding and involvement and negotiate an agreement with clients regarding their immediate and long term health strategy. Readiness to change is assessed in this consultation and largely influences client success and empowerment long term.

Following consultation with the CDE,the holistic model of care promotes assessment from theAccredited Practising Dietitian(APD) who provides dietary guidance. Depending on client needs an Accredited Exercise Physiologist (AEP) can be engaged to address physical activity needs and/or a Credentialled Mental Health Nurse (CMHN) can also be involvedto ensure clients are supported to achieve their desired health outcomes.As noted in the client case study to be presented, the HbA1cfor a newly diagnosed 51 year old lady was reduced from 14.2% (132mmol/mol) to 8.7% (72 mmol/mol),total cholesterol reduced from 9.1mmol/l to 4.1mmol/l, Triglycerides from 21.3mmol/l to 2.0mmol/l and this was achieved within a three month period. At six months the client had begun losing weight, increased physical activity, reached target HbA1c of 6.7% (50mmol/mol) and started to improve their psychological wellbeing and intrinsic motivation; ultimately beginning the pathway to improved health and wellbeing.

O'Brien Healthcare,Cairns, Australia is at the forefront of private practice innovation regarding Diabetes management in Australia. They believe that if a client feels empowered and is placed at the centre of a holistic diabetes care model, this will buildclient knowledge and confidence thereby inspiring consistently better self-management.

Biography

Shireen O'Brien is a Registered Nurse of 15 years and a Credentialled Diabetes Educator. Shireen graduated from the University of Western Sydney NSW Australia in 1997 and completed her graduate certificate in Diabetes Education in 2007 from Curtin University of Technology.She is the Director of an influentialprivate diabetes education company in Cairns - Far North Queensland,Australia called O'Brien Healthcare.

O'Brien Healthcare was established over 5 years ago from the boot of her car (as a mobile diabetes service) and she now has her own practice that consists of a holistic team of allied health professionals who share her drive to support people as individuals. Shireen's company currently involves the expertise of an Accredited Practising Dietitian, an Accredited Exercise Physiologist and a Credentialled Mental Health Nurse. Shireen is passionate about quality diabetes care and as the Director has formulated some novel approaches in clinical diabetes care.