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## *Clinical Champion Update*

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*Date: 10/21/19      Subject: Diabetes*

Diabetes is one of the most common and challenging diseases that we, as primary care providers have to manage. Valley Medical Group has many services/supports in place to make diabetes management easier for both patients and providers. However, it can be very confusing. You have a new Type II diabetic. What do you do first? Where do you refer? Which of our services makes the most sense for your patient? Here is a summary and guide to help you manage and better care for your patients with diabetes:

**Diabetes Education visits:** Bonnie Grenier is currently the only diabetic educator that we have on staff for all 4 health centers so she should be reserved for more complicated patients when possible. If you have a diabetic on insulin, especially if they are on an insulin pump, and are having difficulty managing their blood sugars, you should refer them to Bonnie.

**Diabetes Education Classes:** These are being offered currently at both GHC and NHC. Led by nutritionists (Marjorie Sobil and Diane Alpern) these can be very helpful to new diabetics, poorly controlled diabetics or patients with diabetes who just want to learn more about their disease. Contact the nutritionists to get your patients scheduled in one of these series of classes.

**Nutrition appointments:** Both Marjorie and Diane see patients individually and are very knowledgeable about diabetes management, as well as nutrition. If you have a new type II diabetic that you are starting on oral or injectable medication and they are overweight or obese, you should start with a referral to a nutritionist. For motivated patients this can be done in addition to a diabetes class or SMA or diabetes education visit. In general if their A1C is less than 9, refer to nutrition. If >9, refer to diabetic ed.

**IBH:** Consider referral to IBH if you have a diabetic who is resistant to making behavioral changes that would positively impact their diabetes/blood sugars.

**Nursing:** Take advantage of our excellent nursing staff to assist with teaching blood glucose monitoring and self-administration of insulin or other injectables. Nurses can also contact patients by phone weekly/bi-weekly to get blood sugar readings and help to titrate medications and to provide education and support over the phone between office visits.

**Diabetes SMA (Shared Medical Appointment):** There is a monthly ongoing diabetes SMA in Northampton on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month from 3-4:30 p.m. There is a bimonthly diabetes SMA in Greenfield on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 12:00-1:30 p.m. This is a great option for patients to be able see a provider, diabetes educator or nutritionist and IBH provider all in one visit and to learn more about diabetes management in a supportive group environment.

**Endocrine referrals:** Valley Medical is fortunate to have 2 endocrinologists on staff, Stuart Chipkin and Matt Spitzer. They work out of Easthampton, Greenfield and Amherst. It can take several months to get an appointment with the endocrinologist so referrals to endocrine should be reserved for your most complicated diabetics, those with Type I diabetes or poorly controlled Type II diabetics on insulin pumps or with multiple co-morbidities. Both Stuart and Matt are available for consultations by phone/e-mail if you have a patient or case you need to discuss with them. And don't forget the diabetes case conferences that are held regularly at each health center.

**CHECK OUT THE VMG INTRANET PAGE. LOOK UNDER CLINICAL GUIDELINES AND YOU WILL FIND THE DIABETES PROTOCOL, MEDICATION CHEAT SHEETS, INFORMATION ON INSULIN TYPES AND RAF SCORING.**

**Thank you,**

**Betsy Green NP and Trisha Rogers PA**

**Diabetes Clinical Champions**