

# Our Health

## Helping Families Fight Diabetes

(NAPSA)—There are steps all people with diabetes can take to protect themselves.

More than 14.5 million people in the United States have been diagnosed with diabetes, and a disproportionate number of them are racial and ethnic minorities age 65 and older (African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indians/Alaska Natives).

One good way by which Medicare beneficiaries can protect themselves is through diabetes self-management education (DSME)—a process that incorporates the needs, goals and life experiences of the person with diabetes and one that's guided by evidence-based standards.

To assist Medicare beneficiaries in controlling their diabetes and improving their health, the United States Department of Health & Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) launched the Every Diabetic Counts program. It includes free classes on health, nutrition, fitness and medication monitoring and teaches Medicare beneficiaries how to improve their health and manage their diabetes.

All family members, friends and loved ones of Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes are welcome to attend the free classes in order to be educated in the plan of care and learn how to support the person with diabetes in their life. In fact, Terris King, Deputy Director of CMS' Office of Clinical Standards and Quality, and Georgetta Robinson, CMS' Health Disparities Program Manager, both say



**A unique program teaches people with diabetes—and their families—how to manage their condition.**

that sons, daughters, grandchildren, and extended friends and family have an important role to play in encouraging people with diabetes to take better care of themselves.

Staying healthy and protecting themselves by controlling diabetes is extremely important to Medicare beneficiaries with diabetes and their loved ones. Through this DSME program, Medicare beneficiaries can protect and promote their own health.

The program is currently offered in Washington, D.C., Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, Tennessee and the U.S. Virgin Islands. There are plans to expand the program into other states in the near future.

If you are interested in enrolling in the Every Diabetic Counts program, or if you would like to receive free materials on how to manage and control your diabetes, call the Health Disparities Quality Improvement Organization Support Call Center Hotline at (877) 746-6465.