






Supporting the Transition to College Life with the Use of Technology

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Introduction

- 1 The adaptation from high school to college is one of the largest life transitions to be experienced. This can create additional challenges for those living with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D).
- 2 The five biggest stressors for college students:
 -  Living away from home
 -  Academic demands
 -  Finances
 -  Future
 -  Relationships
- 3 Parents often play a large role in overseeing, monitoring, and decision making in the diabetes care and management of these young adults, leading to a lack of foundational skills and autonomy that they will need when they leave home.
- 4 This transition requires a mental shift for both the parents and the young adult.
- 5 Having a Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) involved in supporting and educating this population can lead to a smoother transition, minimize challenges and complications, and significantly improve outcomes.

CDCES supported recipients of the 2022 Novo Nordisk Donnelly Scholarship, awarded to students who completed an application that included an essay on describing how their life has been impacted by diabetes, and who are entering a four-year college or university program.

Unique Characteristics

- Unique characteristics of this age group:
- Adapting to living on own
 - Increased diabetes distress
 - Some parents overmanaging
 - Gaps in DM education/understanding
 - Risk in complications (drinking, stress, eating disorders)
 - Financial responsibilities shifting to young adult
 - Food choices sometimes limited
 - New social life

Psychosocial Factors

- Several psychosocial factors impact blood glucose in this age group:
- Social life
 - Lack of sleep
 - Poor routines
 - Poor food choices
 - Roommates
 - Caring for self for first time
 - Hiding their diabetes

Gaps in Understanding

- There are common gaps in DSMES understanding for this age group:
- Pre meal bolusing
 - Correct treatment of hypoglycemia
 - Understanding ketones
 - Having a safety plan
 - Lack of understanding full functionality of pumps and CGM
 - Lack of understanding how to read and respond to device reports

Clinical Structure

Cecelia Health clinicians had five months to work with these young adults. Engagements took place mainly through Zoom, some phone calls, emails, and texts. Appointment reminders were sent via text.

All participants were very engaged with multiple visits each month. The majority took place in the late afternoon or early evening after classes. Major topics discussed; Healthy coping, goal setting, stress, device issues, viewing/interpreting data, healthy eating and reducing risks.

How the CDCES assisted

- Assessed skillset
- Overcame barriers
- Built a foundation of education to last a lifetime
- Building autonomy
- Taught proper function and use of devices and reports
- Developed emergency plans
- Improving communication with established providers



How technology assisted

- Learned how to read and use CGM and pump data
- Learned how to share data
- Learned how to find and respond to patterns
- Learned how to address psychosocial factors
- The majority of these visits were over Zoom where trusting relationships were built



Patient Journeys*

Meet Thomas

- ✓ Achieved best A1c in years - **7.3% to 6.2%**
- ✓ Time in Range (TIR) - **49% – 74%**
- ✓ Successful with desired weight loss
- ✓ Implemented better food choices
- ✓ Matured in treating DM

Meet Charlotte

- ✓ A1c improved from **8.7% to 7.4%**
- ✓ TIR - **62% – 52%**
- ✓ Opened up about fears around diabetes
- ✓ Became more comfortable with seeing doctor-opening new communication with providers
- ✓ Learned to better manage diabetes distress

Meet Hunter

- ✓ A1c improved from **6.9% to 6.1%**
- ✓ TIR - **63% – 52%**
- ✓ Gained strong educational foundation to DM management
- ✓ Learned how to prioritize self-care, juggle academic and sorority life
- ✓ Became consistent with pre bolusing
- ✓ Started on an automated system, learning full functionality

Meet Sylvia

- ✓ A1c improved from **10.3% to 7.2%**
- ✓ TIR - **54% – 65%**
- ✓ Overcame fear of pump, learned how to benefit from the use of the device
- ✓ Learned proper pump settings and how to review data
- ✓ Overcame fear of lows and learned how to recognize and treat appropriately
- ✓ Learned how to successfully analyze reports and respond appropriately

*Patient names have been changed.

Young adults with T1D graduating from high school should be referred to a CDCES for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES).

This is one of the four critical times in life that should automatically initiate a referral to help these young adults build a diabetes management foundation to last their lifetime.