

Special Report

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WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

LOOKING FOR DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT SERVICES IN W.VA.?

Trying to find diabetes education services in West Virginia "is like trying to find pieces of a jigsaw puzzle," said Shannon Meade, director of Logan County's Family Resource Network. They're scattered around, and "you need them all to see the whole picture." The state offers no statewide list of diabetes education services, though West Virginia leads the nation in diabetes. The Gazette-Mail pulled together this list with help from various organizations. Feel free to send complete additions or corrections to gazette@wvgazette.com with "Diabetes list" in the subject line.

Hospitals

Most West Virginia hospitals offer one-on-one diabetes education to their patients. The following also offer self-management classes and/or support groups to the public. Some are free, and some are expensive. Only three offer classes for children or teens. Most offer classes a few times a year. Most services require a doctor's referral and are covered by insurance. As of June 15, all listed hospitals have one-on-one diabetes consults:

- ✦ **Braxton Memorial Hospital**, Sutton. 304-364-1126. Counseling sessions with a dietitian who visits once a month.
- ✦ **Broaddus Hospital**, Philippi. 304-637-3139. Classes through Davis Memorial Hospital in Elkins.
- ✦ **Cabell Huntington Hospital/University Physicians**, Huntington. 304-691-1662. Self-management classes through Marshall University. Free monthly diabetes support group. Referral to free cooking classes. Visit <http://musom.marshall.edu/diabetes/index.asp>.
- ✦ **Camden Clark Hospital**, Parkersburg. 304-424-2400. Self-management classes, support groups at Diabetic Wellness Center, consults with dietitian and certified diabetes educator. Visit <http://ccmh.org/ChoosingUs/DiabetesWellnessCenter.aspx>.
- ✦ **Charleston Area Medical Center**, Charleston. 304-388-5555. 10-hour (3 days) American Diabetes Association-recognized diabetes self-management training (can be billed to insurance or \$740 cost), one-on-one or group, billable to insurance. Certified diabetes educator and dietitian. No support groups. Visit <http://www.camc.org/body.cfm?id=730>
- ✦ **City Hospital**, Martinsburg. 304-596-6839. Children's support group, teen group, adult group, led by certified diabetes educator. Four-week Lifeskills diabetic education classes.
- ✦ **Davis Memorial Hospital**, Elkins. 304-637-3139 or 304-642-0618. Certified diabetes educator, 12-hour free "Help Yourself" self-management program, four-session "Lifeskills" medical self-management classes with physician referral (with scholarship if needed), monthly support group, public information presentations.
- ✦ **Fairmont General Hospital**, Fairmont. 304-367-7543. Free "Sweet Talk" diabetes education programs, currently unavailable while hospital hires a diabetes educator.
- ✦ **Grant Memorial Hospital**, Petersburg. 304-257-1044 ext. 3. Referral to self-management group classes and consultations at American Diabetes Association-recognized program at Judy's Drug Store.
- ✦ **Greenbrier Valley Medical Center**, Lewisburg. 304-647-6079. Monthly support group.
- ✦ **Hampshire Memorial Hospital**, Romney. 304-822-4561. Consults with dietitian, with doctor's referral. Classes offered at affiliated hospital, Winchester Medical Center in Winchester, Va.
- ✦ **Jackson General Hospital**, Ripley. 304-373-1475. Classes taught by registered dietitian at least quarterly.
- ✦ **Jefferson Memorial Hospital**, Ranson. 304-728-1693. Four-week, free self-management class, open to the community.
- ✦ **Logan Regional Medical Center**, Logan. 304-831-1101 ext. 1637. Program in development. No self-management classes or support groups yet. One-time seminars, registered dietitian, occasional healthy shopping tours.
- ✦ **Minnie Hamilton Health Center**, Grantsville. 304-354-9244 ext. 2002. Free diabetes support group meetings.
- ✦ **Monongalia General Hospital**, Morgantown. 304-598-0763. Diabetes education classes, monthly diabetes support group at Diabetes Learning Center, certified diabetes educator, dietitian.
- ✦ **Montgomery General Hospital**, Montgomery. 304-442-1243. Lunch seminars.
- ✦ **Ohio Valley Medical Center**, Wheeling. 304-234-8755. Certified diabetes educator, consults with dietitian, diabetes self-management classes
- ✦ **Plateau Medical Center**, Oak Hill. 304-469-8600. Consults with dietitian, with referral.
- ✦ **Pleasant Valley Hospital**, Point Pleasant. 304-675-4340 ext. 1323. Counseling with diabetes nurse, group classes in planning
- ✦ **Pocahontas Memorial Hospital**, Buckeye. 304-799-7400 ext. 1032. American Diabetes Association-recognized classes, free monthly support group.
- ✦ **Potomac Valley Hospital**, Keyser. 304-597-3500. Occasional group classes and regular support group.
- ✦ **Princeton Community Hospital**, Princeton. 304-487-7242. Free diabetes meal planning class every other Thursday. Four times a year, free four-day intensive diabetes self-management classes, with follow-up by certified diabetes educator. Monthly diabetic support group.
- ✦ **Reynolds Memorial Hospital**, Glen Dale. 304-845-3211. Self-management classes.
- ✦ **Roane General Hospital**, Spencer. 304-927-6846. American



"People can really improve, ... but lots of them don't know where they can get help."

— Liz Lawson
Public health nurse,
Boone County

KATE LONG | Sunday Gazette-Mail photos

At least a third of Boone County adults are at risk of diabetes, but public health nurse Liz Lawson's monthly support group is the only open-to-the-public, ongoing diabetes education service in the county. "We're trying to organize a county diabetes project," said Lawson, pictured here in Danville. The state does not track and list services statewide.

State doesn't keep track of diabetes classes, services

Newspaper pulls together list


THE SHAPE WE'RE IN

Want to read other 'Shape We're In' stories? Find them all at wvgazette.com/theshapewerein

By Kate Long
Staff writer

"I read that story in the paper and was hoping you could help me," Carolyn said. "I don't know where else to turn." Carolyn (not her real name) lives in Madison. "I just got diagnosed diabetic, and I want to get a grip on it," she said. "I need help, but don't know where to look. I thought maybe you could tell me where I can find one of those counselors." She had read about a Mingo County man who brought his out-of-control blood sugar down to normal by working for months with a diabetes coach. "I need a counselor like that," she said. So do tens of thousands of other West Virginians. After every newspaper story about diabetes, people call.

Another Boone County woman, Judy Handley of Danville, called a few days earlier. "I don't have diabetes, but sugar's all over my family," she said. "I want to take one of those classes that teach you how to



The state's diabetes program funds Marshall University to generate self-management classes in churches, fire halls and other places where people gather. Here, Dee Wilder (center) of the Bureau of Senior Services and Wendy Lewis (right) of the Partnership of African-American Churches lead a six-week class at St. Albans' Hansford Senior Center. The classes work well, said Sally Hurst, project coordinator, "but we need many more to make a difference."

keep from getting it." About 125,000 diabetics live in West Virginia, according to Gallup Healthways. Another estimated 125,000 are near-diabetic, but can still head it off. Less than half have ever talked with anyone who could show them how to prevent or control "sugar" through physical activity, what they eat, and medication management, according to a federal Centers for Disease Control survey. If this were Kentucky, the two Boone County women could go to the Kentucky Diabetes Resource Directory on the Internet and find a county-by-county list of classes, doctors, and dietitians. They can't do that in West Virginia. Nobody in West Virginia — including the West Virginia

Diabetes Prevention and Control Program — has a list of services, much less a county-by-county list. With no list, nobody in West Virginia really knows what diabetic services are available or where they are. That makes it hard for anyone to accurately target areas of greatest need. About seven years ago, there was such a map on the West Virginia Diabetes Prevention and Control program website. People could click on any county and find services available in that county, if any. The state took it down. "It took too much staff time to keep it updated," program manager Gina Wood said in May. West Virginia's program has only three staff people and a budget of about \$1 million in

"Most of all, it creates a problem for people who need help. A lot of state diabetics are pretty much on their own when they try to learn how to control their diabetes."

PAT WHITE
West Virginia Health Right

state and federal money. "We struggle to find out what's going on," Wood said. "We just don't have the troops to do what needs to be done." West Virginians pay more than a billion dollars for diabetes care annually. Diabetes leads to heart and kidney disease and many other serious problems. It's in every taxpayer's interest to prevent more diabetes, said health economist Ken Thorpe. To slow the rise of health-care costs, Thorpe said, West Virginia should set up a network of programs that help people prevent and control diabetes, he said. A first step: a list of existing services. "That's how uncoordinated we are" A list can be an important thing. In some states, the American Diabetes Association keeps a list. But the ADA closed its West Virginia office three years ago. They say they're coming back in 2013, but they're not here now. It's hard for doctors to refer patients for self-management training when there's no list, said state Sen. Evan Jenkins, D-Cabell, director of the West Virginia State Medical Association. "A good education program takes weeks," he said. "It

SEE AGENCIES, 4C

SEE LIST, 4C

