

In Recognition of World Diabetes Day, Med Pak Interviews Dr T N Nakin

Is diabetes the most common chronic condition you treat?

Yes, it is common. Hypertension is second.

Once diagnosed with diabetes, what is your next step to treat the patient?

After diagnosis the next important thing is to counsel the patient about it, hence it is a life changing disease not only for the patient but for their family too. Then educate the patient about managing diabetes:

- Lifestyle modification: diet and physical exercise
- Treatment/medication: how to use it and possible side effects
- Signs of hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia and how to manage them and consulting a health care practitioner

What are the challenges faced with diabetic patients?

Most patients experience challenges with lifestyle changes.

- The food: affordability and availability of recommended low glycemic foods.
- Stopping old unhealthy habits and adapting to new diet restrictions is a struggle for many but sometimes it is lack of education.
- Life has become very busy and people are committed, never get enough time to exercise but I always tell my patients to make time for exercise because there is



Dr TN Nakin, Medical Practitioner in Hammersdale.

What advice can you provide to other healthcare practitioners regarding treatment of diabetes?

To understand the patients' background and treat them with context, it is important to work with what they have in their cupboards than to recommend food they don't have and cannot afford to buy. It will be difficult for a patient to sustain. To refer appropriately, dieticians are most certainly available to manage the diet component.

Can diabetes be managed through lifestyle? What lifestyle changes would you recommend to your patients?

Most definitely.

- Regular physical exercise, not necessarily to buy a gym membership but to be physically active at home, work, anywhere. Walking, jogging, gardening, and doing house chores.
- Make the best affordable diet choice. I tell them:
 1. "Your best choice does not taste nice but is the healthier option" e.g. drinking water vs fizzy drinks.
 2. If it is not recommended by your healthcare practitioner, do not bring it home, don't buy it! I say so to discourage temptations and "cheating". If one "cheats" it must be planned and to an absolute minimum e.g. a slice of cake.
 3. Regular check-ups with a doctor.
 4. Ask/read about diabetes to understand and empower themselves.



5 Innovative Ways to Improve Your Medical Practice in 2024



It is very important for any business to keep moving and growing from year to year – and medical practices are no different.

As we plan for 2024, it is a good idea to plan and implement a few tangible, measurable steps that will push your practice onwards. Here are five ways you can build your practice in the new year:

1. Look At the Practice from Your Patients' Point Of View

As a medical professional, or as the manager of a medical practice, it is very easy to get caught up in your own daily tasks and lose sight of the bigger picture. The first step in improving your practice is to step back and look at it from the point of view of the people you serve. What might a patient think of your practice? What would they want to see done differently? What would they want to stay the same? Perhaps your booking systems could do with a revamp. Maybe you need to reduce the average waiting period per patient. It might be worthwhile running a patient survey to get some solid data on the matter.

2. Be A Source of Valuable Information

Your patients rely on you as a source of useful information. There is plenty of uncertainty in the world in the midst of the pandemic and lots of misinformation floating around. Make sure that you are recognised as an authority that people can turn to for good advice and objective, scientifically informed, actionable information. Both online and on your business premises, work on improving your information sharing platforms. Blogs, pamphlets, and face-to-face help desks are some of the most effective ways to achieve this.

3. Focus On Your Unique Selling Points

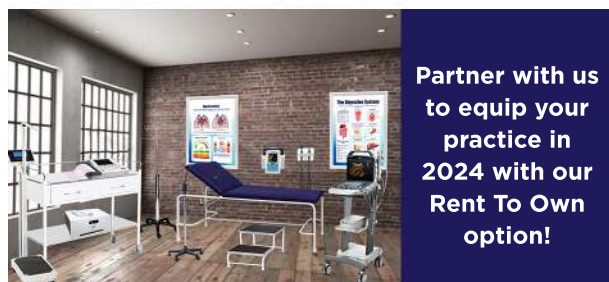
Many medical practices – particularly hospitals and general practitioners' offices – aim to be good at everything. However, the truth is that each practice is unique due to the specific character and experience of its owners, staff, location, equipment, etc. Instead of trying to cover all possible bases and pleasing everybody, focus on what makes your practice special. What do you do better than any of your neighbouring and competing practices? Identify these points and work on amplifying them this year.

4. Offer Training to Improve Your Staff's Performance

If your service offering stays the same from year to year, no matter how good it is, it may as well be moving backwards. You need to upskill your staff constantly, especially as service delivery and client interaction changes in the post-COVID world. With virtual and telephonic consultation becoming more prevalent, perhaps your staff need to undergo telephone training. They might need a general refresher course in dealing with people in person, telephonically and on virtual platforms. Whatever the case may be, prioritise your staff training this year – your patients are certain to appreciate it.

5. Maintain And Upgrade Your Equipment

Each year, you should take stock of your equipment and see if everything continues to serve its purpose as it should. Check that machinery still works, that software is up to date and that old equipment is replaced. If you don't already have a solid relationship with a medical equipment provider like Glenmed, get in touch now. We will not only supply quality, up-to-date medical equipment, but we will also service your tools and ensure that everything continues to work effectively as the year progresses.



Partner with us to equip your practice in 2024 with our Rent To Own option!

In Recognition of World Diabetes Day, Med Pak Interviews Occupational Health Nurse Sister Manaka From Unjani Clinic Qwaqwa

Has there been an increase in diagnosis of diabetes among staff at the workplace?

Yes and no at the same time. Because as an occupational nurse I don't have a progressive follow up on the wellness of the employees in order to do comparison. I might go to one company this year, the following year it might be another company to do wellness in the same company. It is difficult to do stats regarding that. The other thing is because people don't do annual self-screening it is uncertain to say this year out of so many patients who were screened for DM, 3 found to have it where as last year they were not diagnosed with diabetic.

What do you think is the contributor that has caused an increase in Diabetes among your patients?

Stress, compliance, poor diet.

What treatment do you prescribe to patients once diagnosed with diabetes.

Depending on the sugar level. If it's between 7, 5-11 on fasting, I start with metformin 500mg daily, do bloods for fasting glucose and Hb1AC. And monitor to see how it goes. It's uncontrolled, we keep on increasing with a space time of two months.

What is the best advice you can provide to healthcare practitioners treating diabetes?

1. Health education on diet, weight loss exercise and reduction of stress
2. Test urine every visit
3. Advise patients to have their machine to check their sugar at home
4. Do Hb1AC annually or 3-6 in patients not meeting treatment goal, triglycerides, total cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol
5. Weigh the patient every visit
6. Abdominal circumference: target less than 80cm in women and 94cm in men
7. Eye examination
8. Wound care

What role can employers play in staff wellness?

Every year wellness, allow those with DM to eat on time, allow activity at work or gym equipment.



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