

Can insurers save money by providing free diabetes-related medications and supplies?

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Reducing financial barriers to medication access—a strategy known as value-based insurance design (VBID)—can improve medication adherence and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes. The economic and patient-perceived benefits of eliminating co-payments for

diabetes-related medications and supplies are described in a trend-setting study published in *Population Health Management*.

In "Patient-Centered Outcomes of a Value-Based Insurance Design Program for Patients with Diabetes," Daniel Elliott, MD, MSCE and coauthors from Christiana Care Health System (Newark, DE), Jefferson Medical College (Philadelphia, PA), and Temple University School of Medicine (Philadelphia, PA) compared patient self-reports from before and one year after the start of a VBID program that eliminated insurance co-payments for diabetes-related medications and supplies. As a group, the patients reported improved adherence to medication regimens for hyperglycemic control and a significant decrease in out-of-pocket costs associated with non-adherence.

Nearly 90% of the study participants felt that the elimination of co-payments helped them better self-manage their diabetes.

"Improving care coordination is a cornerstone of health reform. That's why this is a watershed paper," says Editor-in-Chief David B. Nash, MD, MBA, Dean and Dr. Raymond C. and Doris N. Grandon Professor, Jefferson School of Population Health, Philadelphia, PA.

More information: The article is available free on the *Population Health Management* website at <http://www.liebertpub.com/pop>.

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