
Overview

This standard covers working with women with diabetes who intend to become pregnant. The standard concerns agreeing a plan to enable the woman to optimise control of her diabetes before conception. The plan will be agreed jointly with the woman and, if she chooses, with her partner or other family support. Prior to any plan being agreed, an assessment of the woman's health in relation to child-bearing and diabetes will be carried out, through discussion and examinations. Where a pre-conception plan is agreed it may include:

1. a different approach to diet and exercise
2. helping the woman learn how to measure blood glucose
3. learning how to gain tighter control over blood glucose levels
4. different medication, including starting insulin therapy for women with Type 2 diabetes.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 include women with diabetes and their partners as members of the care team, involve them in decisions about their care, and provide them with sufficient appropriate information for them to participate fully in making decisions
- P2 assess through discussion
 - P2.1 the woman's understanding of her diabetes
 - P2.2 her ability to self manage, taking into account support from her partner
 - P2.3 her attitude to self managing her diabetes
 - P2.4 her emotional/psychological needs in relation to living with diabetes and to pregnancy
 - P2.5 her history in relation to pregnancy
- P3 through providing information in suitable forms, and through discussion, help a woman and her partner learn the principles of how to manage her diabetes before conception, and during pregnancy, in order to minimise risks associated with diabetes and pregnancy
- P4 emphasise the importance of planning for pregnancy, and of using effective contraception to prevent a pregnancy before the appropriate blood glucose levels have been achieved
- P5 assess levels of blood glucose, HbA1c, rubella antibodies and blood pressure, review medications the woman is currently using, and arrange examinations for long term complications of diabetes, or, where these examinations have been carried out recently, review the findings
- P6 where the examinations and discussions reveal a high level of risk to the woman in proceeding with a pregnancy, provide this information clearly, and sensitively, giving the woman and her partner time to come to terms with the situation, and offer to arrange counselling and support by a qualified member of the healthcare team
- P7 where pregnancy is not contra-indicated by high risk factors, jointly identify priorities for managing the woman's diabetes in the immediate future, taking into account
 - P7.1 any risks inherent in the woman's current condition
 - P7.2 the beliefs and values of the woman and her partner
- P8 arrange or carry out a dietetic review to help to optimise blood glucose control and ensure total nutritional adequacy, provide advice on food safety and hygiene, and provide advice on and arrange for the prescription of folic acid supplements
- P9 discuss and provide suitable information on general health measures for a safe and healthy pregnancy, including smoking, alcohol and street drugs, where relevant
- P10 discuss and agree realistic and safe blood glucose targets and, if they do

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- not already know how to do so, help the woman and her partner learn how to monitor and interpret blood glucose levels, and provide the equipment they will need
- P11 discuss any increased risks of hypoglycaemia, and how it may be recognised, managed and treated
- P12 discuss the options regarding medication for managing diabetes during pregnancy, agree on any changes to medication, and arrange for new medication to be provided
- P13 agree upon what responsibility the woman and her partner will take for managing her diabetes, and what responsibilities will be taken by healthcare practitioners, and provide appropriate encouragement and support
- P14 agree dates for meetings to support and review the care plan, and ensure that the woman and her partner know how to access help and advice between meetings, and emergency help, if they need it
- P15 make an accurate record of the discussion and the agreed plan that can be followed by other members of the care team, the woman and her partner

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 national guidelines on diabetes management, education and service delivery in relation to diabetes and pregnancy
- K2 theories of the causes of diabetes
- K3 signs and symptoms of diabetes, including WHO criteria for diagnosis
- K4 normal and abnormal blood glucose and HbA1c values
- K5 how to monitor glucose levels, HbA1c, lipids, blood pressure
- K6 the importance and effects of patient education and self management
- K7 the psychological impact of diabetes, at diagnosis and in the long term
- K8 how to gather information from patients about their health
- K9 how to work in partnership with patients and carers
- K10 the social, cultural and economic background of the patient/carer group
- K11 the effects of smoking, alcohol and illicit drugs on diabetes management
- K12 the effects of, and how to manage, intercurrent illness
- K13 how to manage hypoglycaemia
- K14 the use of insulin to manage diabetes
- K15 other medications used to manage diabetes
- K16 the long term complications of diabetes and when they are likely to occur
- K17 the risks of a mother's diabetes to the mother and to the child
- K18 the effects of pre-existing long term complications on the risks
- K19 how to manage diabetes before pregnancy
- K20 the medications used to manage diabetes during pregnancy and the medications that are contra-indicated
- K21 how to manage high blood pressure during pregnancy
- K22 the priorities for managing diabetes during each trimester of pregnancy, during labour, and following delivery
- K23 relevant professional guidelines, standards and codes of professional conduct
- K24 the law and good practice guidelines on consent
- K25 your role in the healthcare team and the role of others
- K26 legal frameworks concerning prescribing
- K27 local guidelines on diabetes healthcare
- K28 the arrangements for supporting women with diabetes who are pregnant or who are planning pregnancy
- K29 local referral pathways
- K30 local systems for recording patient information
- K31 audit and quality assurance systems
- K32 sources of practitioner and patient information on diabetes and on pregnancy
- K33 contact details of local and national support groups
- K34 how individuals can access facilities for exercise and physical activity

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and treatment planning

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