nutrition 4 health

Innovative diabetes training for carers

A summary

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We all know that Diabetes is on the increase – currently there are 2.3 million people in UK diagnosed with diabetes and more than 500,000 undiagnosed.

There is a 27% incidence in care homes. In 2001, Professor Alan Sinclair, Head of Europe's First Institute of Older People, identified 1 in 4 residents in care homes have diabetes.

An audit in Cumbria in 1996 highlighted issues regarding lack of knowledge of diabetes and the training needs of staff.

4 years later NHS funding for providing training in care homes in North Cumbria was obtained from a Non Medical Educational Consortium and in 2006 Katrina and Diane's work won the Arun Baksi award for team based innovation in diabetes care.

The National Service Framework 2001, and the 1999 Guidelines of Practice for Diabetes Care for Residents in Care Homes (Diabetes UK) set minimum standards for diabetes care and education of staff.

Since 2000 Diane and Katrina have continued to develop the training and since 2008 they have been working on a freelance basis.

Training is tailored to the needs of the audience and the organisation, making it interactive, reflective, practical and easy to understand.

Issues that concern staff include lack of understanding about diabetes and its treatments, a fear about hypoglycaemia and how to manage it, foot care, confusion about dietary issues, menu planning and other concerns.

The care home staff are dealing with the most frail and vulnerable members of society and sometimes feel isolated. Diabetes is just one part of the complex health problems that affect many people in their care.

For more information please contact Diane and Katrina

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