

Disease Management Initiative focused on Adherence

Doug Clarke



2008 Commitment to Care & Service awards

Dedicated to diabetes care

Doug Clarke's Diabetes Resource and Training Centre for Health Care Professionals, based in Kingston, Ont., is the culmination of a two-decade-long drive to become a skilled educator for diabetes patients and healthcare professionals. Judging by the feedback he's received from partners and patients alike, that effort has been well worth it, garnering him this year's Commitment to Care & Service Award for Disease Management Initiative focused on Adherence.

Clarke says his foray into specialized diabetes management began as a pharmacist at Gray's I.D.A., with locations in Napanee and Deseronto, Ont. There he set up an initial resource centre and wrote a weekly "Ask Your Pharmacist" column in *The Napanee Beaver* newspaper.

From 1998 to 2006, Clarke lent his expertise as a volunteer pharmacist/diabetes educator at the Lennox & Addington Hospital's diabetes clinic. He began establishing a patient base by encouraging clinic patients to access the resource centre he had set up at Gray's I.D.A. He further lent his expertise by volunteering and speaking with the Canadian Diabetes Association.

A part-time volunteer position, started in June 2005 with the diabetes clinic at Kingston's Bagot Street Medical Centre, paid off in June 2006 when he was hired part-time to work with the physicians and nephrologist in the care of diabetes patients. Since then, Clarke has worked to establish and run his resource centre at the pharmacy, where clinic patients who have begun insulin or oral treatments go for follow up consultation. The centre is available for patients 65 hours a week, and also welcomes nurses and pharmacists interested in diabetes treatment training. Consultations are conducted in a separate room attached to the pharmacy.

"The diabetes clinic at the physician's office and the resource centre at the pharmacy have created a synergy in patient care, as both locations monitor adherence and compliance," says Clarke.

Feedback from both the healthcare community and patients has been positive.

"Doug demonstrates enthusiasm in making sure that everyone in the pharmacy is well-educated in all aspects of diabetes care, and he shows initiative in making sure his diabetes patients are

properly controlled and monitored," writes Tricia Carasco, manager of Kingston's Costco Pharmacy. Carasco says the Kingston Costco recently designated Clarke a pharmacist consultant, a designation given only to pharmacists who specialize in specific disease states. She says the diabetes resource centre Clarke set up at Costco has helped make the location one of the largest suppliers of insulin pumps, insulin and test strips in Eastern Canada.

Another colleague, Bozica Popovic, says the diabetes-related lectures Clarke has presented to the Kingston Pharmacists Association have been widely hailed as among the most useful presentations offered by the association.

But a letter of support from patient Tim Loyst—who, after living with diabetes for 30 years has worked with Clarke to lower his blood sugar to what he calls "normal" levels—is the most telling accolade. He writes: "I consider Doug to be a very professional pharmacist, an outstanding educator and above all, a great, great friend."

—Neil Faba

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