



Preparing for CDCES Exam 2026
(Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist)
Step 2

Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, BC-ADM, CDCES
Pronouns: She, her, and hers
President, Diabetes Education Services



Land Acknowledgment

► We acknowledge and are mindful that Diabetes Education Services stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the Mechoopda, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through this area.



DiabetesEd.net Website Orientation



PocketCards

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Question of the Week & Sample Questions

Beverly Thomassian, RN, MPH, CDCES, BC-ADM
CEO, coach, instructor, cheerleader, mentor

www.DiabetesEd.net | info@diabetesed.net | 530-893-8635

Diabetes Education SERVICES

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We are Here to Help!



Bryanna Sabourin
Director of Operations

If you have questions, you can chat with us at www.DiabetesEd.net or call 530 / 893-8635 or email at info@diabetesed.net

Diabetes Education Services Inclusion Statement

Based on the IDEA Initiative inspired by CDR

- ▶ Inclusion
- ▶ Diversity
- ▶ Equity
- ▶ Access



- ▶ We are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in our educational offerings.
- ▶ We recognize, respect, and include differences in ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, size, and socioeconomic characteristics.
- ▶ Our goal is to promote equity and access, acknowledging historical and institutional inequities.
- ▶ We are committed to practicing cultural humility and cultivating our cultural competence.
- ▶ We wish to create a safe space within our community where one's beliefs, experiences, identity, and differences in ability, age, size, socio-cultural/socioeconomic characteristics, and political affiliations are considered and respected.

Prep for CDCES Exam – Step 2

- ▶ Getting ready to take Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist Exam Soon!
 - ▶ Exam content
 - ▶ Study strategies
 - ▶ Test taking tips
 - ▶ [Resources](#)



- ▶ View our “Becoming a CDCES” Step 1 Webinar for info on qualifications and gaining practice hours.

HOME GET STARTED! ABOUT US CONFERENCES ONLINE COURSES BOOKS + STUDY FREE RESOURCES

Start Your Journey Like

Preparing for CDCES Exam?

[Future CDCES – Click Here!](#)

Prep for CDCES Webinars
May 7

Preparing for BC-ADM Exam?

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Prep for BC-ADM –
March 19

Step 1: Becoming a Diabetes Specialist (CDCES)

Step 1 Becoming a Diabetes Specialist (CDCES)

1

Free Webinar (In-CD) 2/24/2026 11:00 AM

[www.diabetesed.net](#)

Focus on requirements to apply

Step 2: Preparing to Take the CDCES Exam

Step 2 Preparing to Take the CDCES Exam

2

Free Webinar (In-CD) 2/24/2026 11:00 AM

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Focus on exam success.

Cert Bundles and Virtual DiabetesEd Training

<p>CDCES Boot Camp Basic Exam Prep Bundle</p> <p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>CDCES Online Boot Camp I 50+CEs From \$ 449.00</p>	<p>Dual Certification Boot Camp CDCES & BC-ADM Exam Prep Bundle</p> <p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>Dual Cert Boot Camp I CDCES & BC-ADM Exams I 40+CEs From \$ 519.00</p>	<p>VIRTUAL DIABETES-ED TRAINING CONFERENCE</p> <p>Virtual DiabetesEd Training Conference (April 15-17th, 2026)</p> <p>From \$ 429.00</p>
<p>BC-ADM Boot Camp Basic Exam Prep Bundle</p> <p>2 3 4</p> <p>BC-ADM Online Boot Camp I 50+CEs From \$ 459.00</p>	<p>Certification Renewal Bundle 14+ Online Courses</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>190+CEs \$ 669.00</p>	<p>Diabetes Care</p> <p>Standards of Care in Diabetes—2026</p> <p>ADA Standards Book</p> <p>ADA 2026 Standards of Care Book \$ 34.95</p>

Fast Facts with permission from www.CBDCE.org



Calling All Health Care Professionals

- ▶ Currently, 16% of people in the United States live with diabetes, and over 38% live with prediabetes according to the [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov).
- ▶ CDCES defined: a compassionate teacher and expert who, as an integral member of the care team, provides collaborative, comprehensive, and person-centered care and education for people with diabetes”



www.cbdce.org

01 — 03

Thinking about Earning the CDCES?

Join over 19,500 health care professionals who have validated their expertise and professionalism by earning the Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) credential.

Become Certified

CDCESs educate and support people affected by diabetes. Earn the most recognized credential in diabetes care and education.

Get started. →

CDCES Live Remote Proctoring (LRP)

- ▶ Candidate uses own computer from home.
- ▶ A compatibility check of the computer's audio/video, webcam and system is required prior to scheduling.
- ▶ The candidate must have a computer with a web camera that can be moved to display the entire room, a microphone, and internet connection to download the PSI secure browser.
- ▶ Calculator built into program



<https://www.cbdce.org/apply-and-schedule>

CDCES Live Remote Proctoring

- ▶ **Breaks: You are NOT allowed any breaks during your LRP exam session.**
- ▶ **Identification:** You will be required to take a picture of yourself via the webcam. You will also be required to show via webcam your photo ID.
- ▶ **Room Scan:** You will be required to perform a 360° scan of your testing room. Room must be free of study materials, papers, reference materials, etc.
- ▶ **Calculator:** The LRP platform has a calculator built-in in the lower left-hand corner of screen.
- ▶ **Communicating with your proctor:** will be conducted via chat during the testing session.
- ▶ **Results will pop up on screen upon completion.**



When will I get my results?

- ▶ You will receive your test results the same day at testing site or if using remote proctoring.
- ▶ You can retake the test as many times as needed
- ▶ Cost –
 - ▶ 1st time \$350
 - ▶ Renewal - \$250



Scoring the Exam

- ▶ Reported as raw and scaled scores
 - ▶ Raw score: number of right answers
 - ▶ Scaled score: statistically derived from the raw score
- ▶ Total score determines pass/fail and is reported as a scaled score ranging between 0 and 99
- ▶ To pass: 70 scaled score units



CDCES Exam First Time Pass rates

2011 -65%

Table 1. Examination Statistics – July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 – Pass Rates by Testing Modality

2012 – 63.5%

2013 – 67 and 69%

2014 - 66 and 67%

2015 - 62 and 64% (test updated)

2016 – 67%

2017 – 66%

2018 – 67%

2019 – 70%

2020 – 2022 67%

2023 – 70%

Candidates Testing - First Time: July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025	Number Tested	Pass Rate
All at Test Center	1123	64%
Live Remote Proctoring	362	62%
Total: First Time Candidates	1485	63%



This is a challenging exam!

SO YOU DIDN'T PASS CDCES EXAM - YET?



Join Coach Bev to Regroup & Reignite your Confidence!

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Not passing the CDCES exam can feel disheartening—but you are not alone. Over 30% of healthcare professionals don't pass the CDCES exam on their first try. Plus, this one setback doesn't define your potential or your ability to succeed.

Join Coach Bev for this *free, supportive webinar* designed to help you regroup, refocus, and reignite your confidence. Bev will share practical tips, common pitfalls, and an action plan to boost your readiness for next time.

Join our CDCES Facebook Study Group



Certification Exam Study Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/diabeteseducationspecialiststudygroup>

Taking the Exam

- ▶ Questions
- ▶ Answers
- ▶ Pitfalls



Keep it Person Centered

- ▶ Focus on psychosocial needs and social determinants of health.
- ▶ Start where the participant is at.
- ▶ Keep the participants characteristics in mind (age, type of diabetes, etc.)
- ▶ We are supporting efforts toward behavior change.



Increase success

- ▶ If the answer you wanted isn't there – Pivot, breathe and readjust.
- ▶ Try not to overthink question/answers.
- ▶ Make sure that the answer you choose fits the situation.
- ▶ Focus on national goals and avoid using your work setting's goal.



Take a Practice Test – Learn how to “work” test questions

- ▶ Weed through the details
- ▶ Make sure you REALLY understand key intent of question
- ▶ Find the stem
 - ▶ Identifies key intent of the question
- ▶ Read all the options or answers
- ▶ Eliminate obvious wrong answers
- ▶ Select **BEST** option



Look for Clues in The Answers

- ▶ Answers with the following words are usually **incorrect**: always, never, all, none, only, must, and completely
- ▶ Answers with the following words are usually **correct**: seldom, most, generally, tend to, probably, usually



Getting to the Right Answers



- ▶ Do not leave any answers blank
- ▶ Look for clues in the question
- ▶ Don't get lured in by juicy answers
- ▶ Avoid imposing your life experience into the question/answer
- ▶ Keep breathing – Get up and move
- ▶ Test anxiety – have a plan on how to address
- ▶ Work even simple math problem on scratch paper

Sample Question -1

- ▶ A patient is admitted to the hospital with elevated glucose levels with a strong family history of diabetes. She is started on fluid replacement and is placed on a clear liquid diet. Her father is in the room and is very concerned. Which of the following would suggest a diagnosis of new onset type 1 diabetes vs type 2 diabetes?



- A. Hyperglycemia
- B. Polyuria
- C. Ketosis
- D. Polydipsia



Sample Question 2

- ▶ MJ has type 1 diabetes and wants to know the possible complications that can result from hyperglycemia during the first trimester of pregnancy. Which of the following complications can result from 1st trimester hyperglycemia?

- A. macrosomia
- B. vascular defects
- C. shoulder dystocia
- D. spina bifida



Vignette Style Question

- ▶ Read the following vignette to answer the next 3 questions.
- ▶ A 47 yr old man with newly diagnosed type 2 diabetes and hypertension. Additional known information.
 - ▶ Married, with 2 teenagers
 - ▶ Professor with a BMI of 32
 - ▶ Started on Metformin 500mg BID
 - ▶ Father died of kidney failure secondary to diabetes



Vignette Style Question 1

- ▶ He says finding time to exercise is challenging due to his work schedule. Using the transtheoretical model, what stage of change is he in?
 - A. Contemplation
 - B. Cost vs. Benefit
 - C. Precontemplation
 - D. Denial



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 - ▶ Strategies to Increase your Diabetes Program or Services
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Vignette Style Question 2

- He requests information about healthy eating. Which meal planning approach best suits this individual until he can see a registered dietitian?
- A. Very low-calorie diet
 - B. Eliminate all concentrated sweets
 - C. Eat 3 meals a day with snacks in between
 - D. Plate Method



Sample Question 3 – Carb Counting

JL uses an insulin pump and is carb counting using exchange list. A typical breakfast includes: ½ banana, 1 cup of milk, 2 tablespoons almond butter and 1 piece whole grain bread. LS's insulin to carb ratio for breakfast is 1:12, for lunch and dinner it is 1:15. Based on this, how much insulin does LS need for breakfast?

- A. 3.5 units
- B. 3.8 units
- C. 3.0 units
- D. 2.8 units

Vignette Style Question 4

KL is 72 years old with a 10 year history of type 2 diabetes. KL's has a BMI of 24.6, A1C of 7.3% and LDL cholesterol of 72 mg/dL. GFR is 62 and UACR is less than 30 gm/g. Has a history of hypertension. Current meds for diabetes include metformin ER 850mg BID, sitagliptin (Januvia) 25mg. Based on the ADA Standards of Care, what is the next best action?

- A. Start a SGLT-2 inhibitor to lower A1C and preserve renal function.
- B. Determine KL's A1C goals and explore social determinants of health.
- C. Stop sitagliptin and suggest initiation of a GLP-1 Receptor Agonist to reduce risk of CV disease.
- D. Refer KL to a RD/RDN to help get A1C less than 7%.



What We Say Matters: Language that Respects the Individual and Imparts Hope | FREE Webinar & Resources Like

Diabetes Education 25th Anniversary

Watch the recorded version!

Sample Question 5

Metformin is an antidiabetic agent different than that of sulfonylurea drugs. Some features of the drug are that it:

- Stimulates insulin secretion and increases hepatic glucose production.
- Causes hypoglycemia
- Lowers hyperglycemia in persons with diabetes, but does not lower blood glucose levels in people without diabetes.
- Results in weight loss and can cause kidney damage.

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Glucose Treatment for Diabetes-Related Hypoglycemia	15 mg	15 mg	15 mg	15 mg
...

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Sample question 6

A person with type 2 is on a twice daily dose basal/bolus insulin and complains of waking up with morning headaches. If the fasting capillary BG is 291, advise person to:

- Increase evening dose of basal insulin
- Increase morning dose of bolus insulin
- Check 3am blood glucose
- Eliminate bedtime snack



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Quantity 1



Test Taking Toolkit

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•220 questions in total divided into Four 50+ computerized quizzes. These quizzes include clinical practice exam questions that provide vignette-style situations and other critical content that will prepare you for the actual exam.

Knowledge = Confidence

- ▶ Most important aspect of test taking
- ▶ Knowing the content will improve your confidence
- ▶ As you study your knowledge base expands



CDCES / BC-ADM Success Page

Melissa is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist based out of North Miami. She is most passionate about using her Medical Nutrition Therapy coupled with Motivational Interviewing skills to help our most vulnerable populations. Since she became a Dietitian and began working with her community, she knew she would pursue a specialization in Diabetes Management to maximize her impact and help those who need it most. She is very excited to join the CDCES community of providers!

Melissa Dolan, MS, RDN, LD/N, CDCES



I want to thank you all for the support you give to Diabetes Educators, but also to those of us preparing for the CDCES Exam. I truly want to THANK YOU for that! I just passed my exam on June 1st, 2023. I appreciate all that you do to simplify the updates and new evidence based practice information. The cheat sheets you provided were the one thing that I would say helped really reinforce the information for me. I also watched the boot camp videos. I had less stress because of your supportive site and that helped so much! I am so honored to be able to make Diabetes easier for patients everyday.

Carolyn Fletcher, BSN, RN, CDCES



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Thank You – Keep in Touch

Certification Exam Study Group

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