

For Immediate Release

Northeast Business Group on Health Releases Employer Guide to Digital Diabetes Tools

NEW YORK, March 22, 2016 – Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH) has released a guide that it calls “a useful entry point” for employers interested in exploring the use of digital tools for preventing and managing diabetes within their employee populations. The guide cites the ways in which digital tools can make a difference in addressing chronic diseases in general and diabetes in particular – convenience, personalization, data collection and management, customization of rewards and incentives, coaching and social networking. It also cites digital tools as useful in supporting patients and physicians in a rapidly transforming healthcare delivery system emphasizing value.

“Employers are keenly interested in exploring new digital tools that could help improve the effectiveness of their workplace diabetes interventions but feel overwhelmed by the sheer number and diversity of them, and the need to find some way to evaluate which ones best match the needs of their employee populations,” said Laurel Pickering, MPH, President and CEO of NEBGH. “We thought it would be useful to provide a basic framework for considering these tools and introduce employers to the capabilities and features offered by a selection of them. We believe digital diabetes tools could help employers achieve better outcomes by addressing challenges with traditional diabetes programs such as patient/employee engagement, effective collaboration with the delivery system and sustaining behavior change.”

NEBGH’s guide is designed to help employers determine which digital features are most important in addressing the specific challenges they face with their workplace diabetes programs, and serve as a starting point for matching solutions. The guide categorizes 25 diabetes tools according to six primary capabilities – group-based health course with live coaches, integrated glucometer with enhanced communication, scripted algorithm-driven coaching, device data download and display, provider-based care management platform and individualized live coaching. The guide includes a checklist to specific features each contains, such as type of educational content, personal information tracking components and social networking connectivity. It also indicates which tools may offer the most opportunities for increasing engagement – a key challenge for employers in designing workplace diabetes interventions.

“Unfortunately, diabetes will continue to be a critical threat to employee population health and a major driver of employer healthcare costs well into the future,” said Jeremy Nobel, MD, MPH and NEBGH Medical Director and Solutions Center Executive Director. “Employers have told us they are struggling to find a mix of programs and benefit strategies that will be effective in helping employees prevent the disease or manage it once they have it, and digital diabetes tools hold promise in improving program effectiveness. Our guide is not designed to be an exhaustive assessment of digital diabetes tools in the marketplace but rather an introductory market scan that will boost employers’ understanding of the scope and array of what tools are available. Our plan is to collaborate with employers in piloting one or more of these tools.”

NEBGH's guide points to various delivery methods for making digital diabetes tools available to employees. Health plans and providers may offer tools to their respective populations, and employers can also contract with third-party vendors to deliver digital tools directly to an employee population or sub-set. Many tools are also available directly to consumers as apps or online.

About NEBGH

NEBGH is an employer-led coalition of healthcare leaders and other stakeholders with the mission of empowering members to drive excellence in health and achieve the highest value in healthcare delivery and the consumer experience. The Solutions Center is NEBGH's research and discovery platform for identifying the most promising, innovative opportunities for improving health outcomes, focused on employers as the catalyst for change. A previous NEBGH Solutions Center report, issued in May 2015 "Transforming Diabetes Management: New Directions for Employers," detailed new innovative approaches to workplace diabetes interventions including, but not limited to, digital tools.

Merck provided funding to NEBGH's Solutions Center for its work on digital diabetes tools.

Access the guide [HERE](#).

For more information, contact Jeremy Nobel at jnobel@nebgh.org or **617-901-7510**

Media Contact:

Dr. Jeremy Nobel
Northeast Business Group on Health
jnobel@nebgh.org
617-901-7510