

## Diabetes Statistics

- It is estimated that 30.3 million Americans or 9.4% of the US population have diabetes.<sup>1</sup>
- 25 % of persons with diabetes may develop foot problems related to the disease.<sup>2</sup>
- Up to 15 % of persons with diabetes develop foot ulcers.
- In 2014, 108,000 persons with diabetes had a lower-extremity amputation. <sup>1</sup>

## Diabetes Foot Management Facts

- Prevention of irreversible diabetes foot complications requires ongoing, comprehensive, timely, and effective treatment often including diabetic therapeutic shoes.<sup>3</sup>
- Diabetic foot ulcers can lead to amputations and are highly preventable. <sup>3</sup>
- Therapeutic shoes can decrease foot pressure, prevent ulcers, and support healing.<sup>4</sup>
- Patients are eligible for diabetic therapeutic shoes when they have diabetes and one of the following conditions: peripheral neuropathy with evidence of callus formation, history of pre-ulcerative calluses, history of previous ulceration, foot deformity, previous amputation of the foot or part of the foot, or poor circulation.<sup>5</sup>

## Consequences of delayed diabetic foot treatment

- Increased patient pain, increased severity of the disease, higher economic cost to patients, their families, and healthcare
- Higher foot ulcer recurrence, longer healing, potential limb amputation, higher mortality

## Increasing Role of Nurse Practitioners in Population Health

- Current Medicare coverage of therapeutic shoes for individuals with diabetes is based on outdated regulations from 1993 and it has not been updated to reflect changes in the practice of Nurse Practitioners (NPs) over years.
- In 1993, only four states (Alaska, New Hampshire, Oregon, and Washington) had legislature granting NPs full practice authority.
- Today, 23 states have licensure laws allowing NPs practice without any supervision to evaluate patients, diagnose, order and interpret diagnostic tests, initiate and manage treatments, and prescribe medications including controlled substances.<sup>6</sup>
- The Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2011), well aware of barriers in primary care practice to high quality care, recommended that states adopt legislation to improve health care access and outcomes through allowing NPs practicing accordingly to their scope of education and training.<sup>7</sup>
- Permitting NPs to satisfy Medicare documentation requirement for coverage of diabetic therapeutic shoes could potentially contribute to reducing hospitalizations, rehospitalizations, and the cost of treating diabetic foot conditions.

### **References**

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