



# THE ROLE OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING IN PATIENT ENGAGEMENT

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**A Type 2 Diabetes Discussion for Payers**

# INTRODUCTION

For members struggling with a chronic illness such as type 2 diabetes, a treatment plan may require adherence to a complex daily regimen and lifestyle changes such as healthy eating and physical activity. Adherence issues may complicate successful outcomes given that some members may be weakly motivated to change unhealthy behaviors that may exacerbate their chronic condition.<sup>1</sup>

Motivational interviewing is a patient-centered technique that can be used by healthcare providers and the care team to engage members and promote treatment adherence. It empowers them as partners in the treatment process and encourages them to be responsible for their own progress toward overall health.<sup>2,3</sup>



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*Motivational interviewing was originally used as an intervention for substance abuse patients who found it difficult to be motivated to change their behavior.<sup>2</sup>*  
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# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

## Motivational Interviewing: What It Is and How It Works

Motivational interviewing is a collaborative counseling technique that can be used by healthcare providers with members with chronic conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, psychosis, and addiction disorders, whereby behavioral change is a part of the treatment plan.<sup>2</sup> It can be employed by the care team to engage patients as follows<sup>4</sup>:

- Express empathy and responsiveness and create a collaborative relationship with patients.
- Deal with resistance instead of arguing with patients about adhering to their treatment plan.
- Gather information about the patient’s ambivalence and reasons for low treatment adherence.
- Assess the patient’s readiness to change unhealthy behaviors and follow the treatment plan.

After addressing a patient’s readiness to change, the treatment team can use these motivational interviewing techniques to explore more barriers to adherence and promote overall health.<sup>4</sup>



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*The main focus of motivational interviewing is facilitating behavior change and treatment adherence by helping patients explore and resolve their ambivalence about change.*<sup>2</sup>  
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Motivational interviewing was first used in the treatment of substance abuse, but it can be effective in promoting treatment adherence in a variety of health conditions and lifestyle modification regimens including diabetes.<sup>5,6</sup>

## Helping to Facilitate Member Engagement and Treatment Adherence in Type 2 Diabetes Care

Motivational interviewing involves employing a basic structure to guide interactions with members called the **OARS** technique<sup>2,7</sup>:

- **O**pen-ended questions that can help build rapport between the provider/care team and the patient to encourage open communication.
- **A**ffirmation through statements of empathy and support of a patient’s past successes with behavioral changes or attempts to change.
- **R**eflective listening, which involves letting patients express their thoughts and then making statements, not asking questions, to capture the essence of what was communicated, thus creating momentum for motivation to change.
- **S**ummarizing all points of discussion to strategically make connections for the patient to express understanding and elicit change talk or statements that signal willingness to change.

The goal is to help the patient resolve his or her ambivalence, develop momentum for change, and explore issues to increase positive health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

Members, providers, and the care team may differ in their beliefs and attitudes about diabetes management. While providers are traditionally trained with a directing style of communication, members may prefer a patient-centered approach to their diabetes care. Knowing how members perceive their individualized treatment plan can help improve adherence as well as the provider’s effectiveness.<sup>6</sup>

# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

## Motivational Interviewing Can Be Effective and Impactful As Part of a Type 2 Diabetes Treatment Program

The complications associated with diabetes can be debilitating, costly, and potentially fatal, with complications more common or more severe among people whose diabetes is poorly controlled.<sup>8</sup> As a result, preventive care practices are essential to diabetes care, but they are largely dependent on patients diligently and consistently following their treatment plan and adhering to appropriate diabetes care and self-management.<sup>8</sup>

The use of motivational interviewing is supported by a number of studies that show it can improve upon traditional advice given in the treatment of a broad range of behavioral problems and chronic diseases, including diabetes.<sup>1,6,9</sup>

One qualitative study using focus groups consisting of patients with type 2 diabetes who were solicited from a large National Institute of Health-funded randomized controlled trial on motivational interviewing and diabetes explored how patients responded to the use of motivational interviewing as a strategy for behavior change and compared it with traditional advice giving.<sup>6</sup>

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*Motivational interviewing is a two-way dialogue technique that can be used by providers and the care team to help change the direction of a conversation with patients and stimulate their desire to change with confidence. Motivation for change starts with the patient; it is not invoked by the provider or care team.*<sup>3</sup>  
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### Traditional Advice

Patients perceived traditional advice giving as a negative (guilt provoking, nagging, shaming) attempt to coerce engagement and adherence to their treatment plan compared with motivational interviewing which encouraged them to be open and take responsibility for their care, including lifestyle modifications for better health.<sup>6</sup>

### Collaboration

Patients enjoyed the collaborative nature of their relationship with providers and members of the care team rather than one in which they were in the receiving position and the provider offered directive care.<sup>6</sup>

# MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Motivational interviewing can help communicate to patients the importance of appropriate diabetes care and self-management as a way to facilitate overall health outcomes.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, studies have shown:

- Improved metabolic control in adults with type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup>
- Short-term weight loss that was considered clinically meaningful for reducing diabetes risk.<sup>9</sup>
- Increased levels of physical activity promoting clinically significant weight loss.<sup>9</sup>

In one randomized, controlled clinical trial, a group of overweight women was enrolled in an 18-month, group-based behavioral obesity treatment program and randomized to individual sessions of motivational interviewing as an adjunct to the weight-control program.<sup>10</sup>

- The adjunctive motivational interviewing group lost significantly more weight compared with the behavioral obesity treatment program control group at 6 months ( $-4.7 \pm 5.4$  kg vs  $-3.1 \pm 3.9$  kg,  $P=0.003$ ) and at 18 months ( $-3.5 \pm 6.8$  kg vs  $-1.7 \pm 5.7$  kg,  $P \geq 0.04$ ).<sup>10</sup> (Figures 1 and 2.)
- In the motivational interviewing group, significant weight loss was found to be the result of increased attendance at group sessions and comprehensive self-monitoring.<sup>10</sup>

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*Motivational interviewing may help change underlying behaviors associated with weight management, which may influence weight loss in patients with diabetes.<sup>1</sup>*  
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Figure 1



Figure 2





# CAREPATH HEALTHY ENGAGEMENTS AND MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Healthcare organizations, providers and members of the care team, and patients with type 2 diabetes may help improve health outcomes as well as reduce the occurrence of diabetes complications through adequate preventive care that includes controlling a patient's blood glucose, blood pressure, and lipids.

With that in mind, the *CarePath™ Healthy Engagements* program was designed to:

- Offer a wide range of tools and resources to help enhance communication and collaboration among payers, providers, and patients.
- Provide industry-leading support, information, and insights for diabetes management.
- Support patients holistically in their management of diabetes.

At the forefront of this initiative is the need to improve engagement and treatment adherence in patients with diabetes. Positive, nonjudgmental support from healthcare providers may help patients reach their individual health goals by placing them at the center of care and involving them in their own healthcare decisions.

Fostering a shared decision-making approach helps encourage collaboration between the provider, the care team, and the patient. It also helps ensure patient treatment plans are individualized and crafted to meet their specific health goals and level of engagement.

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CarePath Healthy Engagements is a comprehensive program designed to help improve the lives of people living with type 2 diabetes and assist those that care for them. [CarePathHealthyEngagements.com](http://CarePathHealthyEngagements.com)

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