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Guidelines for blood pressure monitoring and education through Nova Scotia Diabetes Centres.

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In persons with diabetes, hypertension represents a significant problem contributing to the development and progression of a number of diabetic complications such as cardiovascular disease, retinopathy, and nephropathy. DCPNS survey data taken from 13 NS Diabetes Centres (DCs) (reported in 2000/01) showed that only 27.5% of persons attending those DCs had blood pressure (BP) values within the 1998 CDA recommended target. This supports the need for early identification, education, and treatment of hypertension for individuals attending DCs. Diabetes educators (DEs) should promote aggressive control of BP in persons with diabetes to the same degree as they emphasize glycemic control. These BP guidelines were developed to provide a standard for consistency in how BP is measured and reported to physicians and how people are educated to self manage their hypertension.

Recommendations regarding measuring devices, cuff sizes, routine service, patient self-monitoring, home monitoring, tracking aggregate BP values, education, and accessing community supports are included. The Canadian Hypertension Education Program (CHEP) Recommendations for measuring BP are outlined as the recommended standard technique. An algorithm for reporting BP values to physicians on routine or urgent bases is included. Along with these guidelines, a hypertension education module was developed and is available for NS DEs to deliver in the DC or other community-based setting.

The DCPNS *Guidelines for Blood Pressure Monitoring and Education through Nova Scotia Diabetes Centres* provides DEs with recommendations and rationale to assist them in their efforts to support people to self-manage their hypertension as part of a chronic disease management approach to diabetes care. The DCPNS will continue to collect and analyze BP data through our provincial database, reporting trends, and assisting with initiatives aimed at hypertension management.

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