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In Collaboration with



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**TWO-THIRDS OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS POLLED  
ATTRIBUTE IMPROVED PATIENT SELF-MANAGEMENT TO THE  
U.S. DIABETES CONVERSATION MAP® PROGRAM**

***Majority of Survey Respondents Say This One-of-a-Kind Education Method  
Is Most Effective in Helping Patients Adopt Positive Behaviors and Achieve Good Outcomes***

SAN FRANCISCO, JUNE 4, 2008 - - New research shows 65 percent of participating healthcare professionals resoundingly said they can attribute improved patient self-management to the U.S. Diabetes Conversation Map® Program. The survey findings were announced on the eve of the American Diabetes Association's 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Scientific Sessions (June 6-10) by Healthy Interactions, a global leader in health education (Booth 735). The survey was designed to obtain feedback on the efficacy of the Conversation Map program as a patient engagement tool and its impact on diabetes self-management since it was launched one year ago.

A keystone of diabetes care is self-management education, and structured education programs are a fundamental component of enabling people to do this more effectively. The U.S. Diabetes Conversation Map program is a radically new way to facilitate Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) among patients.

Since its inception last June, the demand and use by healthcare professionals of the Conversation Map program has been so strong that Healthy Interactions realized its three-year goal of training 10,000 healthcare professionals in just 10 months. Additionally, the program now meets the American Diabetes Association recognition criteria for a complete DSME curriculum.

The U.S. Diabetes Conversation Map tools were developed by Healthy Interactions in collaboration with the American Diabetes Association, and the development, training of healthcare professionals, and distribution of the tools are sponsored by Merck. The Conversation Map tools create a discovery-learning experience that uses the power of dialogue and personal exchange. Through this method, individuals realize key facts about diabetes, key beliefs or attitudes coloring their perception of the disease and ways they can change behavior and improve their management of their diabetes.

Four out of 10 healthcare professionals responding to the survey said participation in a Conversation Map session, which inspires personal health change via dynamic conversation-based group discussion rather than a one-way lecture, is in their opinion the most effective method in helping patients to adopt positive behaviors and achieve good outcomes, compared to the 12 percent who cited traditional education sessions as most effective in this goal.

While diabetes self-management is essential to achieving successful health-related outcomes, challenges abound. When Certified Diabetes Educators, Registered Dietitians, Registered Nurses and other healthcare professionals were asked what they believe is the biggest challenge for diabetes patients to manage their disease, more than half (52 percent) cited the issue of fully understanding the lifestyle changes they have to make; that was followed by moderating their diet (17 percent) and not having the right information (15 percent). These are important topics addressed by the Conversation Map program.

The healthcare professionals responding to the survey strongly approve of the Conversation Map program's ability to transform the way they educate patients. In response to how Conversation Map tools have helped them, an overwhelming 80 percent of healthcare professionals who responded said Conversation Map tools make group facilitation more interactive and engaging. Additionally, 63 percent of respondents attribute an increase in patients' interest in diabetes education and a boost in their willingness to learn (53 percent) to the unique education approach. Forty-three percent of respondents said the Conversation Map method stimulates discussion and peer interaction.

When asked to comment about their overall experience using the Conversation Map tools, healthcare professionals offered the following remarks:

- *"One patient stated he 'learned more in one hour than in three years of doctor's visits'"*
- *"This is exactly the teaching mechanism that I've look for since starting diabetes education"*
- *"Amazing to use...truly a wonderful teaching tool"*
- *"Teaching is fun again"*
- *"Made a night and day difference in my education style...and on the patients' ability to learn and understand how education can be applied to their lives"*

"The Conversation Map method of education delivery provides an excellent forum for all the right ingredients for successful learning and ultimately behavior change for the long term: activating the patient, empowering the patient and tailoring education to the patient's priorities", says Gretchen Youssef, MS, RD, CDE, chair of ADA's Education Program Recognition Committee. "The Conversation Map program also satisfies the criteria for curriculum requirements for achieving and maintaining ADA Education Recognition."

“In my experience, the Conversation Map tools allow patients - - especially those who normally would not be eager to speak - - to open up, talk, ask and even answer questions. Through this peer-to-peer interaction and the skills of the facilitator, patients share their experiences, frustrations and concerns leading each other to develop a plan for action,” said Virginia Dittko, APRN, BC-ADM, MA, CDE, Director of Winthrop-University Hospital’s Diabetes Education Center in Long Island, who was named 2007 Outstanding Educator in Diabetes by the ADA.

Ninety percent of healthcare professionals surveyed said they would recommend the Conversation Map tools to their fellow professionals who provide group education to patients. Moreover, 54 percent of respondents said the Conversation Map program could become a standard in global health education. Healthcare professionals said they would like to see Conversation Map tools designed for other disease categories and health challenges, including obesity, heart disease and asthma.

"Merck is proud to provide these valuable tools to healthcare professionals in the United States," said Kathryn Hayward, U.S. Marketing Leader, Diabetes at Merck & Co., Inc. "Merck is firmly committed to improving patient education through our flagship program, Journey for Control, and we recognize the value and impact that this Program has for patients with diabetes."

“Together with the ADA and with Merck’s sponsorship, we are making a very real and important difference in diabetes care across the country. It’s extremely gratifying to hear all the anecdotal evidence that shows Conversation Map tools are working to modify behavior and bring forth positive action,” said Peter Gorman, co-founder of Healthy Interactions.

Healthy Interactions Conversation Map programs have been widely used in North America since 2005. This year alone, it is estimated that up to two million people with diabetes will have a Conversation Map experience.

The online survey of 1,115 healthcare professionals who have firsthand experience with the U.S. Diabetes Conversation Map program was conducted by Healthy Interactions in April 2008. Healthcare professionals who have been trained in and using the Conversation Map tools were invited to take a Web survey. Complete survey results are available by request.

Healthcare professionals can explore the U.S. Diabetes Conversation Map program online at [www.healthyi.com/diabetes](http://www.healthyi.com/diabetes).

A global leader in health education, Healthy Interactions is devoted to driving Personal Health Engagement -- our term for helping individuals commit to healthier actions. We create "Aha! Moments" that inspire people to change personal health behaviors. Healthy Interactions builds partnerships with leading medical and disease associations, not-for-profit organizations, corporations, and caring healthcare professionals trained in our approaches, enabling millions of people to take control of their health and live their best lives. Healthy Interactions Conversation Map programs will be deployed in 26 countries by the end of 2008. Founded in 2003, Healthy Interactions is headquartered in Chicago. For more information, visit [www.healthyi.com](http://www.healthyi.com).

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