Description: Diabetes is a condition where the body is unable to properly use and store glucose (sugar) and causes glucose levels to rise too high (called “high blood sugar”). The challenge is to keep blood sugar levels in a controlled range by following a treatment plan. Having too high or low blood sugar levels can lead to serious health issues, including:

- Damage to the heart and blood vessels
- Nerve damage that may lead to a loss of a limb
- Liver damage
- Kidney damage
- Retina damage (vision problems)
- Bladder infections

Causes: There are two main types of diabetes, type 1 and type 2.

- **Type 1 diabetes:** when the body stops producing any insulin (a hormone that enables the body to use glucose found in foods for energy). Type 1 diabetics must take daily insulin injections to survive. This usually develops in children or young adults, but can occur at any age.

- **Type 2 diabetes:** when the body does not produce enough insulin and/or is unable to use insulin properly (insulin resistance). This usually occurs in people who are over age 40, have a family history of diabetes, overweight and/or physically inactive.

Diagnostic Tests: Blood sugar testing, Hemoglobin A1C, and additional tests are used to diagnose and monitor diabetes. Also, additional tests are used to diagnose and monitor the secondary health effects listed above.

Conversation with Member:

- **General opening such as:** “How are things going with your diabetes care and management?”
- **Offer information:** “I have some information to share with you about your diabetes plan.”
- **Get more specific:** “It is recommended that you do all you can to control your blood sugar levels by taking your prescribed medications and go in for an A1C test every six months. Because there is a chance of complications from diabetes, it is recommended that you go in every year to check your kidney and vision function. Can I help you schedule an appointment?”
- **Lifestyle impacts:** “Establish and follow a self-management plan for your diabetes.”
- **Medical treatment:** “Keep up with routine tests, take your diabetes medications as ordered and update your self-management plan.”
- **Review the member's plan of action:** “What can we work on to update your self-management plan for your diabetes?”
- **National Standards:**
  - HgbA1C measured every 6 months
  - Vision checked every 12 months
  - Kidney function checked every 12 months
  - Diabetes medications taken as prescribed

References: American Diabetes Association Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes, 2015