



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Educating School Nurses about Diabetes: A Priority in Virginia
*Lions Clubs International Foundation Approves Grant for Diabetes Education
at Northern VA Elementary Schools.*

Fairfax, Virginia. (May 22, 2019)—A new pilot project will be funded to benefit children with diabetes attending over 500 Northern Virginia Elementary Schools in 40 school districts.

According to Kathy Gold, RN, Certified Diabetes Educator, working with the Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and the Virginia Diabetes Council (VDC): “The LEARNS (Lions Empowering and Aiding Regional Nurses in Schools) professional education program will provide valuable training to nurses and staff caring for students”. The members of the VDC identified the need for additional support and improved access to diabetes resources. This training is funded by a generous grant of \$18,000 from the LCIF and the local Lions Clubs District 24-L.

Inasmuch as both Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes require unique therapies during the school hours, Gold stressed that: “Proper care of these students entrusted to the care of school personnel is essential.”

The VDC proposed the implementation of a pilot project to provide an E-learning training course for all school nurses and school personnel in the 510 Virginia Elementary Schools within the boundaries of Lions District 24-L initially and hope to expand to all grade levels and the entire Commonwealth of Virginia over a 4-year period.

Overview of Goals:

- Standardize up-to-date training in a constantly evolving field.
- Provide curriculum on healthy lifestyle recommendations, glucose meters, carbohydrate counting, insulin pumps, continuous glucose monitors, medications, emergency situations, and preventing complications.
- Empower the school health personnel and support staff to assist in this care during the school day.

- Implement the Diabetes Medical Management Plan (DMMP) orders from the child's healthcare provider.

School Health Specialist, Tracy White, explained, "The Virginia Department of Education is pleased to collaborate with professional organizations and community stakeholders to obtain funding for specialized training of school staff. These efforts keep our students with diabetes safe, healthy, and ready to learn." It will not be mandated in-person training, but instead be offered as an online training program for self-paced education available throughout the school year. The LEARNS Project will provide licenses for each campus to use for an unlimited amount of staff.

In addition to the LCIF and Lions District 24-L, the VDC and the Virginia Chapter of the American Association of Diabetes Educators have provided funding. The team is confident the first round of educational offerings will justify continued funding beyond the 2019-2020 school year.

Visit the LEARNS Grant project online for more information and to advocate for your school at VirginiaDiabetes.org or Email the team directly at schools@virginiadiabetes.org

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If you would like more information about this topic, please call Kathy Gold at 703-282-4078 or email kathy.gold@DiabetesLocal.org.