
Critical Conversations Framework Aims for **Overcoming Resistance to Therapy Intensification in People with Diabetes**

There is high-quality evidence that timely therapy intensification (treating to goal) has long-term health benefits for people with type 2 diabetes. Research has confirmed a so-called “legacy effect” associated with achieving A1C targets early can help prevent or delay complications and improve quality of life for years to come. Despite this evidence, research has also shown that therapy intensification delays when people with diabetes fail to meet goals is too often the norm. These delays, referred to as “therapeutic inertia,” are a significant contributor to poor outcomes in diabetes globally.

To help address this challenge, the American Diabetes Association’s (ADA’s) Overcoming Therapeutic Inertia (OTI) initiative has developed a practical approach to addressing patient-level barriers and resistance to therapy intensification. Known as Critical Conversations for Overcoming Therapeutic Inertia Framework, it provides a roadmap for quickly surfacing and addressing issues that can lead to unnecessary therapeutic delays. The framework aims to promote early positive conversations about the nature of diabetes and associated treatment that can help patients move more smoothly along their treatment journey.

Success of these the “critical conversations” is predicated on the implementation of certain best practices for patient-centered care. These include:

- Creating a personalized diabetes care plan for each patient
- Setting a shared A1C goal and a time frame in which to meet it
- Consistently screening for social and emotional barriers and subsequently making referrals to support resources, including diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES)
- Using a team-based approach and leveraging staff practicing at the top of their license

Below are the four critical conversations. We encourage you to consider incorporating these into your conversations with patients.

1. **The nature of type 2 diabetes is to change over time, as your insulin production changes.** Key messages include:
 - This is not a personal failure and doesn’t mean the patient has done something wrong.
 - Emphasize that diabetes is a serious disease and indicate that you take it seriously, too.
 - Although diabetes is progressive, your actions can make a difference in slowing diabetes progression over time.
2. **Your treatment plan will change over time, as your diabetes changes.** Key messages include:
 - Adding medications may be necessary as diabetes changes.
 - There are many great treatment options, and new ones coming all the time, that can help at each stage of your diabetes journey.
 - Adding new medications is not a personal failure, but part of how diabetes treatment progresses.
 - We will work with you to find a treatment plan that both achieves their A1C goal and considers your preferences and values.
3. **You can’t do this alone.** Key messages include:
 - Achieving treatment goals is a team effort.
 - We, your health care team, are available and ready to help.
 - Seek the help of family, friends, and community support resources like diabetes education
4. **Share your difficulties with managing your diabetes.** Key messages include:
 - Managing diabetes day in and day out can be hard. Share anything that may be getting in the way of managing your diabetes.
 - Your health care team is always here to help.
 - Your health care team is on your side and will support you in whatever ways you need to manage your diabetes well.

