

# Andrea Noud, MS, RD

## Outpatient Diabetes Educator



### **What is your job title?**

Outpatient Diabetes Educator

### **Where do you work (setting and/or company)?**

Bronson Healthcare Group

### **How long have you been at this job?**

15 months

### **Please describe your job (including typical role, population served and anything else you feel is important in understanding the job):**

I provide outpatient diabetes education to people with type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes, as well as pre-existing diabetes during pregnancy. Education is provided in both an individual and a group setting. Topics covered include pathophysiology of diabetes, monitoring blood glucose levels (how to use a glucometer as well as blood glucose target ranges), factors affecting blood glucose, hyperglycemia, and hypoglycemia management, reducing risks, and healthy coping. Patients are given an individualized consistent carbohydrate meal plan along with nutrition education to help them make healthier choices for better blood glucose management.

### **Does your job require any additional schooling or education?**

Yes! We are required to work toward obtaining our Certified Diabetes Care and Education Specialist (CDCES) certification. This is the same credential as the well-known Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) certification; the name was just recently changed!

### **What are possible places of employment for your position?**

The possibilities are truly endless! Specializing in diabetes care opens up many doors and makes you much more valuable as an RDN. RDNs who work as diabetes educators hold positions in many specialty clinics including Diabetes and Endocrinology, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Outpatient Pediatrics and more! They can also be found working in inpatient settings, as well as long term care, wellness programs, home healthcare services, web-based diabetes care programs, private practice, and even in sales for diabetes pharmaceutical and technology companies.

**What is your favorite thing about your job?**

My favorite thing about my job is working with insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors (CGMs). I love sitting down with patients and looking at the data provided by these awesome pieces of technology, and then using them as educational tools to help increase my patients' awareness of what is happening inside their bodies, and to come up with a game plan to make improvements in their care when needed.

**What is your least favorite thing about your job?**

My least favorite thing about my job is probably the charting. When working in an accredited diabetes program, there are a ton of charting requirements, but once you get the hang of it, you can breeze right through it.

**Why/how did you choose your field and how did you get into it?**

I chose this field because of my own personal history with having gestational diabetes. I received a lot of support during my pregnancy and I knew that I wanted to help other women have healthy babies too.

**What is your educational background?**

I received my Bachelor of Science in Dietetics from Western Michigan University and attended the Coordinated program in Clinical Dietetics at Grand Valley State University where I completed my Master of Science and my dietetic internship simultaneously.

**What is your job/work background?**

Aside from working in the hospital, I am an adjunct professor at a university where I teach both a dietetics-specific course as well as an elective nutrition course that is available to all majors.

**Why did you decide to become an RD?**

When I was pregnant with my daughter, I had gestational diabetes and saw an RD multiple times throughout my pregnancy. Prior to my diagnosis, I was not the healthiest and never gave food much thought, other than how it tasted. After attending gestational diabetes class, I was amazed at how I could use food to control my blood sugar, and I was instantly hooked. I knew that I wanted to share the power of nutrition with others in hopes of creating a healthier community.

**What do you think are the most important things for students and/or new RDs to know?**

I think that when we are in school, sometimes we have ideas and expectations of what we think it will be like once we enter the workforce, whether it's a certain salary, total autonomy, or simply landing that dream job right off the bat. Keep in mind that nothing is handed to us just because we have our degree and passed the RD exam. You'll have to continue to work hard and prove to your colleagues that you're a valuable member of the medical team every day. You might even have to take a job initially that is less than glamorous. Keep an open mind and know that everything you do is a learning experience and helps you grow. You want that higher salary? Prove to your manager that they need you! You want to put orders in and make

decisions for your patients on your own? Build strong relationships with the physicians you work with and prove to them that you are the expert! No matter what your career goals are, if you work hard every day, you'll get there!

**What areas in dietetics do you think will become more important/growing in the future?**

I think nutrigenomics is where it's at. We already know that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to nutrition and health. Being able to individualize our recommendations even further based on genetics is an invaluable tool and makes me excited for the future of dietetics.

**Tell us more about yourself/anything interesting you'd like to share!**

I love learning about other cultures and providing individualized care to patients based on their cultural and religious food preferences. Within the next five years, I would love to become a Spanish interpreter at my hospital so that I can complete appointments with my Spanish-speaking patients in their language, which I think will definitely help me build an even stronger rapport with them.