



BGB BYLINE

Beyond Blood Sugar: Embracing Complexity in Diabetes Care

Author:
Angelo Casa, Ph.D., AVP, Medical Director,
Medical Strategy and Scientific Affairs at BGB Group

November marks Diabetes Awareness Month, and this year's theme, "Taking Action to Prevent Diabetes-Related Health Problems," arrives at a pivotal moment in our understanding of this complex condition. As we reflect on how far we've come in diabetes care, perhaps the most profound shift has been recognizing that diabetes extends far beyond glucose management into nearly every aspect of human well-being.

The Evolution of Understanding

Not long ago, diabetes was colloquially known as “the sugar disease,” a reductive label that captured only a fraction of its impact. This narrow view shaped treatment approaches that focused primarily on blood glucose control while overlooking the intricate web of pathophysiological, physical, emotional, and social factors that influence both the development and management of diabetes.

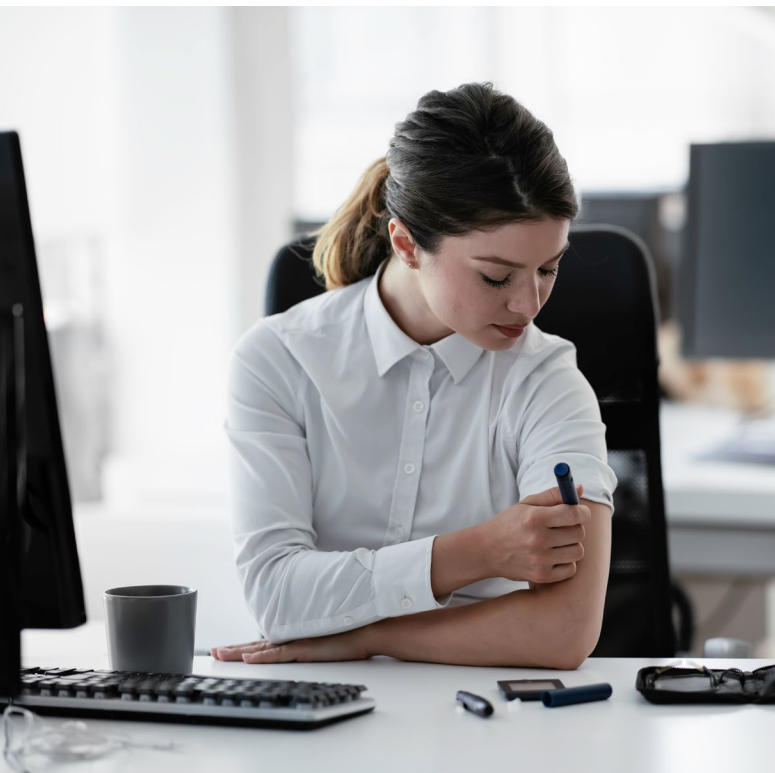
Today, we’re witnessing a fundamental transformation in how the medical community approaches diabetes care. Recent updates to clinical guidelines reflect a more comprehensive understanding that acknowledges the condition’s multifaceted nature. This evolution represents more than incremental progress. It signals a paradigm shift in how we conceptualize chronic disease management.



Well-being at Work and Beyond

Another theme for the 2025 awareness day, “Diabetes and Well-Being at Work,” highlights how the workplace presents unique challenges for the millions living with diabetes. Stigma, discrimination, and exclusion remain persistent barriers that extend beyond professional settings into all areas of life. These social determinants profoundly impact health outcomes, yet they’ve historically received insufficient attention in traditional care models.

Consider the daily negotiations required for diabetes management in professional settings: timing medications around meetings, managing dietary needs during business lunches, or dealing with misconceptions from colleagues. These challenges illuminate why effective diabetes care must address not just physiological needs but also the environmental and social contexts in which people live and work.



A More Holistic Approach

The shift toward comprehensive care recognizes that successful diabetes management requires addressing multiple interconnected factors.

Biological Complexity:

Beyond glucose control, we now understand the importance of cardiovascular health, renal health, weight management, and the prevention of complications through integrated therapeutic approaches.

Psychological Well-being:

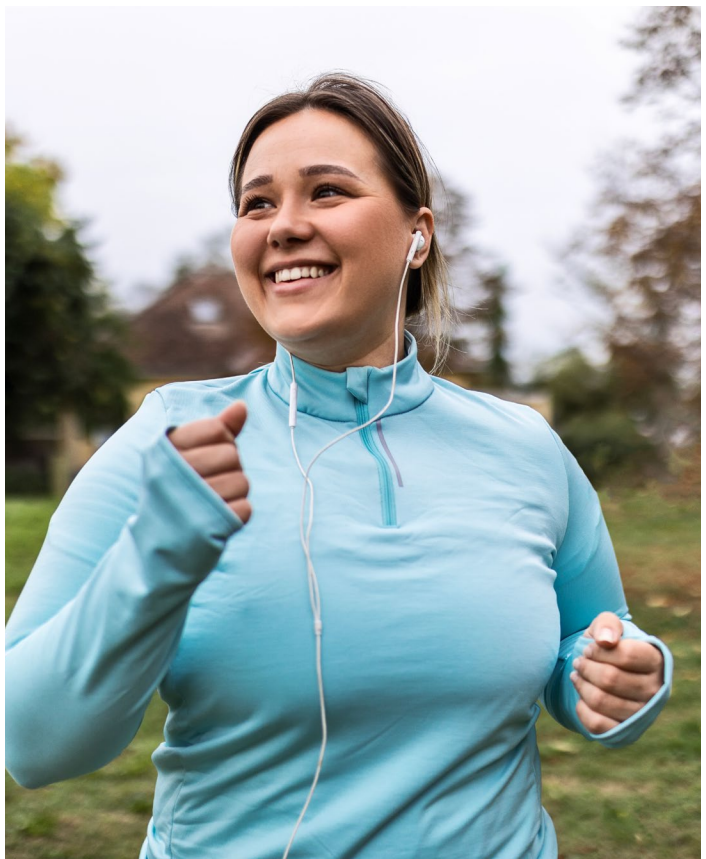
The emotional burden of chronic disease management significantly impacts outcomes. Anxiety, depression, and diabetes distress require attention alongside traditional biomarkers.

Social Support Systems:

Community connections, whether through family, friends, or support groups like “Diabuddies,” play crucial roles in sustained health improvements.

Environmental Factors:

Access to healthy food, safe spaces for physical activity, and supportive workplace policies all influence diabetes outcomes.





The Promise of Innovation

This expanded understanding has catalyzed remarkable therapeutic advances - though some might argue it's the therapeutic advances that have catalyzed our expanded understanding of the disease. Either way, modern treatment options increasingly address multiple aspects of cardio-renal-metabolic health simultaneously.

At BGB Group, our medical, strategy, and creative teams work with clients developing comprehensive therapies, including GLP-1 receptor agonists. These treatments exemplify how glycemic control and weight management are just part of the story. A guideline-directed approach must also address cardiovascular and kidney risk reduction in patients.

These innovations reflect a broader trend toward precision medicine that considers individual patient needs, preferences, and circumstances. The one-size-fits-all approach is giving way to personalized strategies that acknowledge the unique challenges each person faces.

Looking Forward with Hope

As we observe Diabetes Awareness Month, there's genuine reason for optimism. The growing recognition of human complexity is fostering more compassionate, effective approaches to care. Healthcare providers increasingly understand that treating diabetes means treating the whole person - their biology, psychology, and social context.

This evolution extends beyond diabetes. The lessons learned from embracing complexity in diabetes care inform our approach to other chronic conditions. As we become more sophisticated in understanding the interconnected nature of human health, we develop better tools and strategies to support people in living fuller, healthier lives.

The path forward requires continued commitment from all stakeholders, including researchers, healthcare providers, employers, policymakers, and communities. By acknowledging and addressing the full spectrum of factors that influence diabetes outcomes, we move closer to a future where comprehensive well-being, not just disease management, becomes the standard of care.

This Diabetes Awareness Month, let's celebrate how far we've come while recognizing the work that remains. The evolution from "sugar disease" to comprehensive care represents more than medical progress. It reflects a fundamental shift in how we understand and support human health in all its complexity.



Need expert guidance navigating the complexities of modern diabetes care?

Our medical, strategy, and creative teams are here to help. Contact Amanda Eckel at aeckel@outreach.bgbgroup.com to discuss your diabetes communications goals.



About the Author

Angelo Casa, Ph.D.

AVP, Medical Director, Medical Strategy and Scientific Affairs at BGB Group

With a Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology from Baylor College of Medicine, nine years of medical communications expertise at BGB Group, and prior experience as lead scientist at Weill Cornell Medicine, Angelo brings unique bench-to-business perspectives to diabetes care discussions.

About BGB Group

BGB Group, founded in 2005, is an independent agency with more than 500 employees that provides comprehensive services spanning healthcare advertising, medical communications, payer and market access, and strategic consulting for pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical technology organizations. BGB delivers innovative solutions across diverse therapeutic areas, and is committed to speed, efficiency, and superior results that drive impactful outcomes for its clients. Learn more at www.bgbgroup.com.