States are stepping up with novel approaches to improve prescription drug access. Effective prescription assistance programs center on people rather than product. They help people with chronic conditions like diabetes access needed medications, medical devices and supplies, then connect with other supports to meet their unique needs and circumstances.

1. NAVIGATORS PROVIDE HOLISTIC HELP
   People who struggle with prescription costs are likely experiencing other hardships. Trained program navigators help to identify and address unmet needs, including prescription assistance.

2. BRIDGE RESOURCE GAPS
   Raise awareness and utilization of existing public and private assistance sources. Connect people and programs, then fill gaps rather than duplicate efforts.

3. AVOID PATIENT COST BARRIERS
   People already struggling with prescription barriers should not be asked to pay for assistance program access or donated products, or pay a mark-up or spread on discounted products.

4. HAVE BROAD, EQUITABLE ELIGIBILITY
   Avoid ID requirements and eligibility criteria that may disproportionately exclude people of color, low wage earners, disabled individuals and other underserved communities.

5. APPROPRIATE ADEQUATE STATE FUNDS
   Omitting critical program elements to avoid a fiscal note undermines reach and utilization. New programs require funding to support public awareness campaigns, navigator training and support, and impact reporting.

6. ENGAGE COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS
   Each state’s health care and community service ecosystem is unique. Engage medical societies, charity clinics, non-profit organizations, faith communities and other stakeholders to help develop and implement statewide solutions.

7. IDENTIFY THE RIGHT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR
   New programs need a “home” in the right state department or agency to be successful. What works in one state may not work in another. Identify the agency with resources and expertise to provide person-centered assistance.

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Visit diabetesleadership.org or email contact@diabetesleadership.org