

So in summary...

- Be prepared to give details about your diabetes treatment regimes and medical history if you expect to be individually considered for employment based on the requirements of the specific job.
- If questions arise about your medical fitness for a particular job, seek support from your diabetes team.
- A single episode of severe hypoglycaemia should not per se disqualify you from employment, but recurrent episodes of severe hypoglycaemia may affect your ability to safely perform certain jobs, especially when those episodes cannot be explained.
- Hyperglycaemia does not pose an immediate risk of sudden incapacitation on the job, but long-term complications are relevant in employment decisions when complications of diabetes are established and can interfere with the performance of the actual job being considered.

- Be prepared to discuss the need for accommodations on the job in order to perform work responsibilities effectively and safely. These include accommodating daily diabetes needs and, when present, the complications of diabetes. All such accommodations must be tailored to your individual needs and be effective in helping you perform the job.

Conclusion

Individuals with diabetes can and do serve as highly productive members of the workforce. While not every individual with diabetes will be qualified for, nor can perform, every available job, reasonable accommodations can readily be made that allow the vast majority of people with diabetes to effectively perform the vast majority of jobs. The therapies for, and effects of, diabetes vary greatly from person to person, so employers must consider each person's capacities and needs on an individual basis. People with diabetes should always be evaluated individually with the assistance of experienced diabetes health care professionals. The requirements of the specific job and the individual's ability to perform that job, with or without reasonable accommodations, always need to be considered.



ADOLESCENT DIABETES EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

Information for Young People

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In almost all situations you should disclose your diabetes if your employment application requires you to.

In all but a few rare cases, there is no reason why people with diabetes should not have equal access to jobs; the exceptions being when employers, for some positions, may be unwilling to accept employees who are at risk of hypoglycaemia.

Are some jobs more suitable for people with diabetes?

This depends entirely on each individual looking for a job.

Some professions may be more suitable, depending on your diabetes control and also advice from your healthcare professionals.

For instance, some people with diabetes may wish to do more physical exercise rather than be at a desk all day, but obviously there is a balance to be struck and good blood glucose control might be essential for a role like this.

Similarly, many people with a good blood sugar routine may prefer fixed working hours in order to maintain their stability. Some people with diabetes seeking a job will also look for the freedom to inject insulin or test their blood glucose whilst at work.

I am dependant on insulin; does this exclude me from some jobs?

As an insulin user, the following jobs may not be available to you, although there is no legislation in New Zealand pertaining to this.

This list does not cover every position, and an employer may use their own discretion.

- Fire service
- Ambulance service
- Prison service
- Airline pilots and Airline Cabin crew
- Air traffic control

This list is by no means exhaustive.

Certain professions in New Zealand (for example, the Military and the Police) have strict criteria for young people with type 1 diabetes who want to apply.

Employment decisions should not be based on generalizations or stereotypes regarding the effects of diabetes. The impact of diabetes and its management varies widely among individuals. Therefore, a proper assessment of individual candidates for employment or current employees must take this variability into account.

Can I be a vocational driver?

- People with Type 1 Diabetes in New Zealand are generally not considered fit to drive heavy trade vehicles, taxis, buses and other related vehicles. The NZTA may, in exceptional circumstances, grant a licence after consultation with your general practitioner and diabetes specialist. If a licence is granted to drive any of these vehicles, then strict conditions are likely to be applied.

