



## Letter to the Editor

### Therapeutic Patient Education

Sir:

I read with interest the Letter to the Editor by Taylor *et al.* (2000). I am in total agreement with their “call for action.” It coincides with action taken by colleagues from the Diabetes Education Study Group (DESG) of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes. The president is Professor A. Maldonato <a.maldonato@iol.it>.

Professor J-P. Assal (Geneva, CH) and his colleagues from the DESG sponsored a WHO meeting on the subject and their report (WHO, 1998) was reviewed in *EfH* (Stewart, 1999). I was the educational consultant to that group.

Maybe, one of these days, with the efforts being urged by these people and others, doctors will listen to patients and care for them in ways that help them become the managers of their own health. “Preventive education” is required for “healthy people” but it is too late for people who are already afflicted by a chronic disease (such as diabetes). For them, meaningful education becomes “therapeutic.”

### References

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- WHO (1998). *Therapeutic Patient Education—Continuing Education Programmes for Healthcare Providers in the Field of Prevention of Chronic Diseases*. Report of a Working Group. World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, WHO.

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