

Exercise 3.2 Scenario 1 Dorothy

'Diabetes is a chronic condition in which the levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood are too high. Blood glucose levels are normally regulated by the hormone insulin which is made by the pancreas. Diabetes occurs when there is a problem with this hormone.'

When diabetes is poorly managed and blood glucose levels remain high, the following complications can occur:

- 'Kidney damage
- Eye damage
- Nerve damage to the feet and other parts of the body
- Heart disease, strokes and circulation problems in the leg
- Sexual difficulties including erectile dysfunction
- Foot ulcers or infections resulting from circulation problems or nerve damage.'

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Diabetes_explained

Dorothy is 71 years old and lives with her husband of 49 years Stan. Stan has difficulty hearing and spends most of his time pottering around their garden. Dorothy is overweight and spends most of her time indoors. She was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in her mid-sixties, which she is not managing well. She loves cooking and the highlight of her month is baking her infamous rock cakes and other yummy biscuits that her daughter takes home for the grandchildren when she comes to visit. Over a year ago Dorothy developed an ulcer after catching her ankle on the bottom of an open cupboard door. The wound is dressed regularly but the ulcer is not healing and Dorothy's doctor is concerned that it may necessitate an amputation if treatment continues to be unsuccessful.

As an informed friend how can you support Dorothy (and Stan) across the spectrum of social issues?