

## Brave New Worlds: How Virtual Environments Can Augment Traditional Care in the Management of Diabetes

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### Abstract

New technologies, such as online networking tools, offer innovative ways to engage patients in their diabetes care. Second Life (SL) is one such virtual world that allows patients to interact in a 3D environment with peers and healthcare providers. This article presents a framework that demonstrates how applications within SL can be constructed to meet the needs of patients with diabetes, allowing them to attend group visits, learn more about lifestyle changes, and foster a sense of support and emotional well-being. This experiential approach to education may prove more engaging, and therefore successful, than existing strategies. Addressing concerns relating to privacy and liability is a necessary first step to engage providers in this new approach to patient care.

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**Abbreviation:** (SL) Second Life

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