

## ► Q&A WITH AN EMPLOYER

Todd Wells is the Executive Director of the Federal Managers Association. As an employer, Todd hired a young adult with T1D; a disease of which he had little understanding. By working with his employee, they established an appropriate level of communication and understanding of T1D. He had the following insights to share with an employer who has recently hired a young adult with T1D and what to expect from them in the workplace.

### **1 WHEN YOUR EMPLOYEE WITH T1D ORIGINALLY TOLD YOU THEY HAD DIABETES WHAT WERE YOUR THOUGHTS? (DID YOU MAKE A CONNECTION BETWEEN TYPE 2 DIABETES)?**

“At the time, I was asking a lot of questions. I was not familiar with diabetes besides what’s on the news. I absolutely did have a skewed understanding of it. Our conversations opened up a whole new world that I would have never known existed.”

When an employee discloses their diabetes early in their career, it can promote open and early discussion, allowing employers to inquire about T1D. In doing so, they will be better able to know how to accommodate your needs and what is appropriate or not as it relates to diabetes. Self-advocacy can also help this process because it not only makes you feel more empowered, but it helps to properly educate those around you.

### **2 DID YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR ABILITY TO PERFORM THEIR JOB DUTIES BECAUSE OF DIABETES?**

“I had very little concern because we had talked right up front. My employee was also very open and attentive to their needs and how I could help them.”

An employer may have extra concerns if there are not great medical resources nearby. This may cause more concern in an emergency situation. It’s important to discuss with your employer when they should be genuinely concerned and when to not be.

### **3 IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD NOW SAY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE FUTURE EMPLOYERS WHO DON’T KNOW MUCH ABOUT T1D TO KNOW ABOUT HIRING SOMEONE WITH T1D? ANY POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT?**

“A supervisor would like to be aware of any conditions like this. Yet, in reality you can’t expect the employer to do research on their own or to know what’s appropriate research for what the employee needs. You really have to be assertive with your supervisor if you want them to be informed. It’s important to establish ahead of time with your employer what to personally do if a perceived emergency occurs (*like you have not showed up to work for a matter of hours.*)”