

Barriers to and Reasons for Glycemic Control among adults with T2DM: Perspectives from Health Care Professionals

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Abstract

Introduction: Type 2 diabetes mellitus is a global epidemic. It is a leading cause of morbidity and mortality among adults in Sri Lanka. It has a significant impact on the individual, their families as well as the economy and the health care system of the country. There is a limited data available on health care professionals' perspectives regarding glycemic control among adults with type 2 diabetes mellitus in Sri Lanka.

Objective: To explore the perception towards glycemic control among adults with T2DM as perceived by health care personnel.

Design & Methods: A qualitative design was used. Focus group discussions with nurses (n=30), and in-depth interviews with doctors (n=16) were conducted until data saturation. Matrix analysis was used to analyze data.

Results: Findings from qualitative data revealed three themes: 1) barriers to glycemic control, 2) reasons for adequate glycemic control, and 3) suggestions to improve glycemic control. Participants broadly agreed in identifying barriers to effective glycemic control.

Conclusions: Nurses and doctors perceived that doing diet control, regular exercise and taking medication properly on a long-term basis are challenging behaviors for adults with T2DM. Furthermore, health care professionals encountered many barriers when attempting to provide quality diabetic care. Further, the findings revealed some suggestions for effective diabetic care.

Keywords: Type 2 diabetes mellitus, Glycemic control, glycemic control behaviors, Qualitative research

I. INTRODUCTION

Type 2 Diabetes mellitus (T2DM), is a major health concern of healthcare systems and health policy makers worldwide. It places a considerable economic burden to a country due to its serious complications. Prevention and control of such chronic illness based on the situation of the country is challenging for a health team. The national prevalence of DM is 10.3% in Sri Lanka [1]. The highest prevalence of 18.9% of T2DM is reported from the Western Province of Sri Lanka [2]. However, most previous studies have assessed the prevalence

of diabetes, complications of diabetes and poor glycemic control among people with diabetes Sri Lanka by relying on the biomedical perspectives[1]. The biomedical point of view is too narrow in scope to handle the complex nature of a chronic disease like diabetes [3]. In Sri Lanka, there is limited data available on how adults with T2DM control their glycemic levels as perceived by health care professionals. Therefore, this study explored the perspectives among nurses and doctors regarding glycemic control among adults with T2DM.

Nurses are the main caregivers and monitors of adults with T2DM in the hospital wards and diabetic clinics in Sri Lanka. Therefore findings from this study can improve the body of nursing knowledge to provide appropriate diabetic care for adults with T2DM in Sri Lanka

II. AIM & DESIGN

A. Aim

This study aimed to explore the perspectives regarding glycemic control among adults with T2DM as perceived by health care professionals.

B. Design

A qualitative design was adopted. The study was conducted in the Colombo South Teaching Hospital (CSTH), a tertiary care hospital and a family practice center (FPC), a primary care unit in the Colombo district. Inclusion criteria for health care professionals were: provided care for adults with T2DM for more than one year in medical/surgical wards or the DM clinic at CSTH/FPC. Doctors were endocrinologists, surgeons, physicians and family practitioners currently working at CSTH and FPC at the time of the study. Nurses were registered nurses and diabetic educator nurses. More than one year of experience was required for when recruiting health care professionals for the study because they needed experience in caring for adults with T2DM in order to understand their behavior. There were 30 nurses and 16