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Evaluating a multidisciplinary diabetes education program for improving glycaemic control and cardiovascular risk factors: A retrospective cohort study

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With a growing trend favouring fewer medications and greater emphasis on self-management through lifestyle change, health education programs offer a costeffective and easily implementable method that could pave the future for chronic disease management. Limited research exists on the efficacy of these programs for improving diabetes and cardiovascular disease, particularly in regard to objective measures of glycemic control and cardiovascular risk. Such programs have the potential to be implemented across a wide variety of community settings. In this study, we evaluate a community-based education program aimed at informing, engaging with and empowering patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) to make effective lifestyle changes. The significant proportion of patients who underwent nil or positive change in relation to their glycaemic control medications highlights the value of education as both a supplementary and stand-alone tool. This is not only convenient and generally preferred by patients, but is also of financial benefit on a patient and government level. Beyond this, these programs may translate to reduction in overall downstream risk associated with cardiovascular and cerebrovascular adverse events. This also acts to reduce the burden on resources and efforts focused on addressing these dreaded further complications, in addition to improving patient prognosis. The research also draws attention to the significance of empowering patients to seize control of their health through supporting them in developing self-management strategies and healthy habits that potentially carry benefit for a lifetime.

Biography

Mark P. Ranasinghe is a fourth year medical student at Monash University and a student researcher at the Baker Heart & Diabetes Institute. He has a strong interest in cardiology with published research and has designed and executed a multi-disciplinary health education program for patients with Type 2 Diabetes in Melbourne's south-east.

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