



Challenges and successes of managing diabetes mellitus and dementia: a nursing overview

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Challenges and successes of managing diabetes mellitus and dementia: a nursing overview.

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Introduction

Background

The incidence of diabetes mellitus and dementia is rising rapidly, and these conditions require considerable management to maintain health and wellbeing.

To our knowledge, this is the first exploration of nurses' views of the experience of supporting those with both dementia and diabetes mellitus to manage these dual conditions.

Aim

To describe the experiences, successes, issues and challenges of nurses when managing adults with diabetes mellitus along with dementia.

Method

Qualitative, semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with community and diabetes specialist nurses drawn from five health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland.

The interviews were conducted on-line, audio-recorded with consent, transcribed and framework analysis used to identify themes.

Results

Fifteen nurses participated in the interviews.

Four themes were identified:

- 1) Who's responsibility is it?
- 2) Community and diabetes specialist nurses: the pivot point,
- 3) Education to manage co-morbidities,
- 4) Interprofessional communication.

Key Quotes

"The daughter wasn't able to be there to administer the insulin in the morning but then the diabetes specialist nurse changed the regime to give the insulin at lunchtime when the daughter could conveniently give it to him" (FG 1, P1).

"It is imperative to have the support of district nurses especially when family are not really able to engage for whatever reason because we couldn't manage without them" (FG2, P3).

Demographics

No	Profession	Band	Base	Years Qualified	Dementia Training	Dementia Update	Diabetes Training	Diabetes Update
1	District Nurse	7	Community	3-4	Not stated	Yes	No	Yes
2	District Nurse	5	Community	0-1	No	No	No	No
3	Community Staff Nurse	5	Community	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Yes
4	Diabetes Specialist Nurse	7	Hospital	5+	No	No	Yes	Yes
5	Community Staff Nurse	5	Community	5+	No	No	Yes	Yes
6	District Nurse	7	Community	5+	No	No	No	No
7	Community Staff Nurse	5	Community	1-2	No	No	Yes	Yes
8	Diabetes Specialist Nurse	7	Community	5+	Not stated	Not stated	Yes	Not stated
9	Diabetes Specialist Nurse	6	Community	5+	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
10	District Nurse	5	Community	0-1	No	No	No	Yes
11	Community Staff Nurse	5	Community	1-2	No	No	No	No
12	Community Staff Nurse	5	Community	4-5	Yes	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated
13	Diabetes Specialist Nurse	7	Community	5+	Yes	Not stated	Yes	Yes
14	Diabetes Specialist Nurse	6	Community	4-5	No	No	Yes	Yes
15	Community Staff Nurse	5	Hospital	5+	Yes	Not stated	Yes	Not stated

Conclusions/Recommendations

Community and diabetes specialist nurses face many challenges when supporting individuals living with diabetes mellitus and dementia.

Sharing patient information among practitioners in different settings is critically important.

Information technology could overcome the limitations of 'silos' of note keeping and further education to establish more effective communication and partnership working are recommended.

References/Authors

Sharkey, F. & Coates, V. (2023), Challenges and successes of managing diabetes mellitus and dementia: a nursing overview, Primary Health Care (submitted).