

Shared continuity for Type 2 Diabetes

Feasibility study for a randomised controlled trial

What was the study?

This pilot study investigated the attitudes of older patients to General Practice Registrars and Practice Nurses providing care for the management of their Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus.

- patients were randomly divided into two groups:
 - the 'control' group continued with the same care they'd been receiving
 - the 'intervention' group was seen by a GP Registrar and Practice Nurse, with the GP checking in on consultations
- both groups were seen for diabetes care twice in six months
- there were 16 patients in the control group and 14 in the intervention group
- average age of the control group: 70.6
- average age of the intervention group: 72.

Results

At the end of the study, some patients were interviewed regarding their experience in the study. Responses were as follows:

- patients were unsure of the role of the GP Registrar
- patients were willing to see a GP Registrar as it allowed the Registrar to learn and freed up the GP, allowing time for follow up
- patients said the attitude of the GP Registrar was important in establishing a relationship
- patients in the intervention group said Practice Nurses enabled continuity of care
- some patients in the intervention group weren't completely satisfied, as they felt the GP Registrars rushed them and missed information.

Conclusions

- Diabetes outcomes were similar between the control and intervention groups at the end of the study.
- The study demonstrated that it is possible to investigate shared care of chronic disease management with GP Registrars.
- The intervention was acceptable to the majority of participants and provided positive educational outcomes for GP Registrars.
- GP Registrars reported an increase in exposure to, and confidence in, chronic disease management.
- Shared care for chronic disease management is a feasible educational model for GP Registrar training.
- If implemented as research, or as an educational tool, this model requires thorough preparation, communication and training for all parties.
- The study was designed as a feasibility study and the results should be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size.

Key researchers

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Project funding

This specific project was funded by Coast City Country General Practice Training.

Any questions?

If you have any further queries with regards to this project please contact:

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About ISPRN

The Illawarra and Southern Practice Research Network (ISPRN) is a partnership between the University of Wollongong's Graduate School of Medicine (GSM) and the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI). ISPRN supports individual investigator projects and provides a framework for other researchers to partner with GP practices in research.

About IHMRI

IHMRI is an independent health and medical research institute based on the University of Wollongong campus. IHMRI's vision — *excellence and innovation in health and medical research supporting better health services leading to a healthier Illawarra community* — encapsulates our belief that by linking academic and clinician researchers around common health and medical issues, research findings can be rapidly translated into improved clinical practice in the Illawarra region and beyond.

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