

further efforts from healthcare professionals, charities and the DVLA are required.

NB: Co-first authorship RA Dixon and A Lloyd.

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An exploration of the perceptions and requirements of using email communication for people with diabetes and on insulin therapy requiring specialist nurse care

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Objective: To explore the feasibility, acceptability, potential benefits and barriers to the use of email which aims to address communication for those patients with diabetes requiring support to optimise diabetes management.

Methods: A questionnaire was completed by 23 patients newly referred to the specialist diabetes service for assessment and 11 diabetes specialist nurses (DSNs) locally. This was followed by eight semi-structured interviews. The quantitative analysis was using the software programme SPSS 16, the interviews by content analysis.

Results: The results were grouped into five domains: confidence in the use of email, the nurse/patient relationship, use in insulin therapy, email communication integration within the DSN service and choice. The perceived key benefits were access to and convenience and speed of support. Email advice relating to insulin therapy differed depending on the participants' experience and knowledge. Patients would favour direct access to the DSN service to seek advice after discharge, particularly as there was a perception of patient clinical details shared across providers. Limitations and understanding of the implications are required by both patients and DSNs.

Conclusion: Email perception by most participants is a valuable additional tool to aid communication and improve service delivery. Patients' views have added a different perception on direct access to the specialist service. How this can be incorporated as services increasingly are delivered across various providers will be a challenge.

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The educational value of children's support holidays organised by Diabetes UK

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Aim: The current estimated prevalence of Type 1 diabetes in children in the UK is one per 700–1,000. Diabetes UK organises yearly children's support holidays in order to help children learn to manage their diabetes more independently. The aim of the study was to evaluate the impact and educational effectiveness of one of the holidays on children's confidence and independence in managing their diabetes.

Methods: Twenty-eight children at a children's support holiday were asked to answer yes, no or maybe to a series of questions about diabetes and its management before and after the holiday.

Results: While most children (96.4 per cent, $n = 27$) initially felt confident about monitoring their own capillary blood glucose levels, only 32.2 per cent ($n = 8$) felt able to administer their own insulin, which improved to 92.8 per cent ($n = 26$) by the end of the week. Half of the children felt uncomfortable sharing their diagnosis with others, which decreased to 32 per cent ($n = 9$) by the end of the event. Ability to

carbohydrate count improved from 28.6 per cent ($n = 8$) to 67.8 per cent ($n = 19$), and 92.8 per cent of children felt that they could manage their diabetes more independently by the end of the holiday. The children felt very positive about making new friends, and enjoyed the activities at the camp. Most (82.1 per cent) would like to return, and 92.8 per cent would recommend the holiday to others.

Conclusions: This study highlights that children's support holidays are a valuable educational and social experience for children living with diabetes. Diabetes UK should offer such opportunities to a greater number of children each year.

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The educational value of children's support holidays organised by Diabetes UK: volunteers' perspective

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Aims: Diabetes UK organises yearly children's support holidays in order to help children learn to manage their diabetes more independently. The aim of the study was to evaluate whether such holidays have an educational value for adult volunteers.

Methods: Seventeen volunteers were asked to answer questions about diabetes and its management at the beginning and end of the holiday. Answers were ranked 0–5, with 0–1 being assessed as poor, 2–3 as moderate, and 4–5 as a high level of confidence.

Results: Of the 17 volunteers, eight had a medical background and seven lived with diabetes, which would indicate an overall high level of experience with diabetes. However, a majority initially responded with poor or moderate confidence levels with regard to insulin administration (64.7 per cent, $n = 11$) and carbohydrate counting (70.6 per cent, $n = 12$) which decreased by the end of the week to 17.6 per cent ($n = 3$) and 29.4 per cent ($n = 5$), respectively. Ability to adjust pumps improved from 41.2 per cent ($n = 7$) to 52.9 per cent ($n = 9$), and confidence in managing pump malfunction increased from 29.4 per cent ($n = 5$) to 47.1 per cent ($n = 8$). All of the volunteers reported to have enjoyed the social interactions and activities and would like to return to a similar holiday in the future.

Conclusions: This study highlights that children's support holidays are a valuable educational and social experience for adult volunteers. Volunteering opportunities should continue to be publicised, especially amongst the medical community.

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The relationship between diabetes self-care, psychological adjustment, social support and glycaemic control in the Lebanese population with Type 2 diabetes

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Objective: The purpose of this study was to assess the relationships between diabetes self-care, psychological adjustment, social support and glycaemic control (HbA1c levels) among Lebanese adults with Type 2 diabetes.