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A qualitative study of the impact culture and lifestyle has on the management of type 2 diabetes among UAE Nationals

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Background:

The UAE is a federation of seven Emirates, situated in the Arabian Gulf. The capital of the UAE is Abu Dhabi. The UAE has a type 2 Diabetes prevalence of 19% among 20-70 year olds. This prevalence ranks the UAE as 19th in the world (Martinez, 2013). This research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the UAE culture and what impact culture has on prevention and disease management. The research also addresses the barriers and enablers to disease prevention and management.

Aim:

To identify barriers and enablers associated with the prevention and management of Type 2 Diabetes among UAE Nationals.

Method:

The study adopted a Grounded Theory approach. Participants were purposively sampled from the Diabetes Clinic at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City which is one of the major teaching hospitals located in Abu Dhabi.

Participant inclusion criteria:

UAE Nationals aged 40-59 years, diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes for a minimum of 3 years and able to converse in English.

Data collection and Analysis:

Data was collected through semi structured one on one interviews. The interviews were approximately 45 minutes in duration. Sampling continued until saturation was achieved and no new themes emerged from the data. The data was analysed using open, axial, and selective coding with Nvivo 10 data system used to support the data analysis process.

Results and Discussion:

A theoretical Model ‘influences of Type 2 Diabetes’ was developed from the research findings which included the themes of culture, barriers and enablers to healthy lifestyles and public health. The focus of this poster is the Barriers and Enablers associated with the prevention and management of Type 2 Diabetes among UAE Nationals.

Bandura, A. (2004). Health Promotion by social cognitive means. *Health Education and behavior*, 31 (2), 143-164.

Martinez, R. (2013). Diabetes in the world. Health Intelligence.

Results & Discussion:

Barriers and Enablers to a healthy Lifestyle emerged as a key theme influencing Type 2 Diabetes management. Barriers identified included the subthemes of Lifestyle and lifestyle changes, food availability, environment (weather & urbanization), cost of good food, disease knowledge and clinic support.

“The UAE has changed the ways of communication, the way transportation has changed, extra food is there. We are very urbanised. 40 years back we were not like this” [Participant].

Other themes that emerged within the subthemes included the influence and impact of home help, indolence, perception of not having enough time for physical activity, multinational food availability and family influences. Enablers to change identified were family support, availability of good food and physical activity, disease knowledge and clinic support.

“My husband always warns me what I can and cant eat, and don’t forget your diabetes. Even my work colleagues always remind me, my surroundings are very good” [Participant].

This research demonstrates the environmental, physical, and social influences as barriers to behavior change (Bandura, 2004). This study identifies disease perception and disease severity, along side practical considerations such as perceived lack of time, indolence and lack of motivation as factors contributing to an individual self management and adherence. Within this study the majority of participants emphasized cultural considerations such as cultural and social norms, food rituals, and the importance of cultural socialization and the significance of cultural celebrations and religious events all influence an individuals ability to place disease management as a priority.

Theoretical Model ‘*Influences of Type 2 Diabetes*’