

Diabetes educator training in the United Arab Emirates (UAE):

A review on the outcomes and impact

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Aims

Diabetes is highly prevalent in the Middle East. Patient education relies mostly on clinicians and nurses; trained diabetes educators (DEs) in the region have been few in number. The Imperial Diabetes Educator Training (IDET) Programme was established in 2014 to address this. We aim to evaluate the need and impact of IDET on patient education in the last six years.

Methods

Information on students and graduates was obtained from the IDET Coordination Office. The number of patients seen by DEs involving IDET graduates in three of the largest diabetes centers in Abu Dhabi was used as a surrogate impact indicator of the programme on patient education. Quarterly HbA1c measurements of patients following DE sessions were also evaluated.

Results

In 2014 before IDET, the number of DEs in healthcare facilities were very low. By 2019, IDET graduated 78 trainees, with alumni working as DEs in different UAE cities and abroad. Eleven DEs are licensed by the Abu Dhabi Department of Health. Seventeen trainees are enrolled in 2021. In 2019, 935 patients were seen by the eight ICLDC DEs. Upon follow-up, 286 (30.6 %) patients observed a decrease of 1% HbA1c in two subsequent visits.

Conclusions

Results indicate an increase in DE practitioners; this had a significant positive impact on the education of patients with diabetes. DEs have also been instrumental in improving patient health outcomes during the Covid-19 pandemic. IDET key performance indicators should periodically be assessed for improved results.