Increasing patient activation through diabetes self-management education: outcomes of DESMOND in regional Western Australia

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Introduction

• Self-management education programs are a core component for the effective management of type 2 diabetes (T2D)1.
• Patient activation is a behavioural concept that describes the knowledge, skill, and confidence a person has in managing their own health care2.
• Higher patient activation scores have been linked to improved self-management behaviours, better clinical outcomes and reduced cost of delivering care4.
• The Diabetes Education and Self-Management for Ongoing and Newly Diagnosed patients (DESMOND®) program is the only evidence-based self-management program available to people living with T2D in Australia.
• Person-centred interventions that include skills mastery, problem-solving and increased confidence are most effective in increasing activation4.
• The behavioural underpinnings and person-centred philosophy of care of DESMOND make it well placed as an intervention to increase patient activation.

Aim

To evaluate the effectiveness of DESMOND in increasing patient activation in adults living with type 2 diabetes.

Methods

• 510 people diagnosed with T2D attended the DESMOND program across regional Western Australia (Figure 1)4.
• Patient activation was measured using the Patient Activation Measure (PAM), prior to and immediately after DESMOND participation.
• PAM produces a total score ranging from 0 to 100, where higher scores indicate greater patient activation7.
• Four levels of activation have been identified, reflecting a developmental progression from passive receipt of care toward greater active involvement (Figure 2).
• The Wilcoxon signed rank test was utilised to determine statistical change in PAM from pre-to-post DESMOND.

Results

• Overall median PAM scores increased by 9.7 points post-DESMOND (pre: 65.8; post: 75.5; p<0.001, z=-11.745) demonstrating a large effect (r=0.52) (Figure 3).
• Of all participants, 61.2% experienced a clinically significant increase in patient activation post-DESMOND, defined as ≥5 point increase in total activation score10.
• Furthermore, a significant increase in the proportion of people scoring in the highest level of activation (Level 4) was observed pre to post-DESMOND attendance (30.6% vs 54.9%, p<0.001).

Discussion

• The improvements in patient activation observed post-DESMOND were both clinically and statistically significant.
• Evidence shows these positive changes in activation will result in improved health outcomes, decreased hospitalisations and reduced health care costs9.

Conclusion

• DESMOND is an effective intervention in increasing patient activation.
• These findings, in addition to extensive research linking improvements in PAM with improved health outcomes, further confirm the importance of DESMOND in the self-management pathway for people with T2D.
• Future work will explore the impact of DESMOND and increased patient activation on clinical and economic outcomes in Western Australia.

References