

News from the Diabetes UK Annual Professional Conference, Glasgow, 7–9 March 2012

Diabetes advice failing to reach patients

Clinicians think they are giving much more healthy living advice to people with diabetes than the individuals think they are getting, according to new research (Hawthorne, 2012).

The research found that almost all clinicians (99.6%) say they routinely talk about physical activity with people with diabetes who are overweight, while 88% said they advise them about their diet. Yet less than half of overweight people with diabetes (45%) said a doctor had talked to them about physical activity during the previous year, while for diet advice the figure was 57%.

Dr Gillian Hawthorne, the lead researcher in the study, said, "Clearly, doctors are committed to give people with diabetes the right guidance but all too often this advice is not being heard by the patient. We need to look into how the right messages get across clearly." ■

Hawthorne GC (2012) Diabetes care provision in UK general practices: patient's and healthcare professional's perspectives. *Diabet Med* 29(Suppl 1): P450

Young adults with diabetes receive poor care

Only a fifth of young adults aged 16–24 with diabetes receive the recommended care checks for their condition, according to research presented at the *Diabetes UK Annual Professional Conference 2012* (Young, 2012).

The study analysed data from the 2009–10 National Diabetes Audit to identify that those aged 16–24 are the least likely of all age groups in England to receive the health checks and services they need. Only one in five young adults gets all the health processes recommended by NICE, including eye examinations and foot checks.

Lead researcher Dr Bob Young, from Salford Royal Hospital, said, "Systems of care for young and working age people with diabetes should be specifically targeted for improvement." ■

Young B (2012) National Diabetes Audit (NDA): routine care is less effective and outcomes poorer in younger people as compared with older people who have diabetes in England. *Diabet Med* 29(Suppl 1): P141

Putting Feet First campaign

Diabetes UK launched a campaign at their *Annual Professional Conference* to bring an end to the "national disgrace" of thousands of preventable amputations in people with diabetes, as new research has once again highlighted the unacceptably poor levels of footcare for people with the condition (Thomas, 2012)

The Putting Feet First campaign highlights the fact that people with diabetes are over 20 times more likely to have a lower-limb amputation (National Diabetes Support Team, 2006), and that about 80% of the 6000 diabetes-related amputations in England every year are preventable (International Diabetes Federation, 2005; The Information Centre, 2012).

By demanding an end to the postcode lottery of NHS footcare, the campaign aims to reduce diabetes-related amputations by 50% within 5 years.

A new study presented at the conference suggests that an unacceptably high number of hospitals are failing to comply with NICE guidance on when to refer patients to specialist footcare (Thomas, 2012). Meanwhile, a separate study at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust has found that less

than half of individuals admitted with emergency diabetes-related foot problems had the blood supply to their feet assessed and just over a quarter were assessed for nerve damage (Iqbal et al, 2012).

Diabetes UK hopes the new research will highlight the importance of healthcare professionals supporting the Putting Feet First campaign by making sure they understand the footcare people with diabetes should be getting and the potentially devastating consequences of this not happening. The charity wants everyone with diabetes to get a thorough annual foot check and for foot ulcers in people with the condition to be referred to specialist diabetes footcare teams within 24 hours. For more information, see page 78. ■

National Diabetes Support Team (2006) *Diabetic Foot Guide*. NHS Diabetes, Newcastle. Available at: <http://bit.ly/ndst2006> (accessed 18.04.12)

International Diabetes Federation (2005) *Position Statement – The Diabetic Foot*. IDF, Brussels. Available at: <http://bit.ly/IIAnAn> (accessed 18.04.12)

Iqbal S, Majid Z, Tiwari A et al (2012) Do we care about our diabetic patients' feet? Diabetic foot examination at the front-door. *Diabet Med* 29(Suppl 1): P295

The Information Centre (2012) *Hospital Episode Statistics 2007/08–2010/11*. The Information Centre for Health and Social Care, London. Available at: <http://bit.ly/IIlBik7> (accessed 18.04.12)

Thomas R (2012) NICE feet shame about the sores: an audit of foot inspection of in-patients suffering with diabetes. *Diabet Med* 29(Suppl 1): A39