

IMPLEMENTING A SCREENING TOOL TO ASSESS FOR DIABETES DISTRESS IN ADOLESCENTS WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES

SPENSER BEASLEY, FNP, DNPS

BACKGROUND

- Diabetes distress is the negative emotional impact of living with and managing diabetes; it affects over 1/3 of adolescents with type 1 diabetes due to the stress of dealing with multiple daily insulin injections or pump use, frequent blood sugar checks, and extensive nutrition knowledge.
- Diabetes distress leads to:
 - Poor glycemic control (hyperglycemia)
 - less frequent self-care behaviors
 - high levels of psychological distress
- All of these factors lead to complications such as cardiac, renal, and eye disease.
- ADA guidelines recommend implementing screening for diabetes distress after the age of eight, using diabetes-specific validated tools.
- Diabetes distress is often disguised as depression, but treatment for depression does not necessarily resolve diabetes distress; children with diabetes distress often need tailored therapy (psychotherapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, solution-focused therapy).

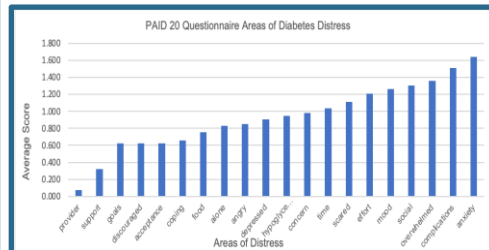
PURPOSE

- This Doctor of Nurse Practice (DNP) project aims to implement a screening tool for diabetes distress in adolescent patients (ages 12-20) with type 1 diabetes.

METHODS

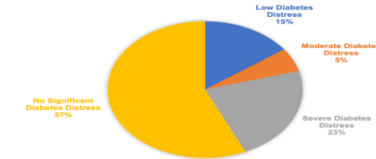
- Implementing a screening tool for diabetes distress can help providers identify patients needing additional resources such as mental health care or increased appointment frequency.
- Adolescent patients with type 1 diabetes were given the PAID 20 questionnaire upon arriving at a local pediatric endocrinology clinic. The patients who participated in the study completed the screening tool using a QR code on their cell phone or tablet. Scores were collected and analyzed using REDCap.

RESULTS



- This bar graph represents factors that contribute to diabetes distress.
- Areas with the most significant distress scores include:
 - anxiety about diabetes
 - fear of complications from diabetes
 - feeling overwhelmed with diabetes care
 - Dealing with the social impact of diabetes.

SURVEY RESPONSE



- Findings demonstrated that significant levels of diabetes distress occurred in nearly 1/3 of patients who completed the survey.
- These findings validate that diabetes distress is a significant problem in the selected population.

RESULTS (cont.)

- The procedures for implementing the PAID screening were feasible and caused minimal disruption to clinic workflow.
- 56 adolescent patients were identified for the screening, with 53 screenings completed over the 10-week project period.

CONCLUSIONS

- The results of this study were consistent with previous studies discussed in the literature review and support that diabetes distress is a significant problem in adolescents living with type 1 diabetes.
- Implementing a screening tool for diabetes distress can help providers identify patients who need additional resources, such as mental health counseling or increased appointment frequency.
- The ADA notes that combining mental health care with counselors should be part of diabetes treatment and encourages incorporating physical activity, which can benefit mental and physical health.
- Based on the frequency of elevated diabetes distress scores during the project, our future plans involve a collaborative effort with behavioral health clinicians. Interdisciplinary care has the potential to enhance coping strategies for patients with scores in the moderate to severe categories, thereby improving their overall diabetes management.
- This project proved to be straightforward to implement, applicable to the patient population, and has the potential to improve the care of adolescents with type 1 diabetes. The project site will continue using the screening tool and hopes to expand the project to include behavioral health referrals for needed patients.

REFERENCES

