

Level and determinants of diabetes knowledge in patients with diabetes in Zimbabwe: a cross-sectional study

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Introduction

A previous study of beliefs about health and illness in Zimbabweans with diabetes mellitus indicated limited knowledge about diabetes and the body, affecting self-care and health-care seeking behaviour. The aim of this study was to assess the level of diabetes knowledge in Zimbabwean adults with diabetes mellitus, to determine the main gaps in knowledge and identify the socio-demographic and diabetes-related determinants that predict diabetes awareness and self-care practices.

Methods

A cross-sectional descriptive study was performed using a standardized self-report Diabetes Knowledge Test questionnaire (DKT) of 58 respondents, 32 women and 26 men. Results were analysed with descriptive and analytic statistical methods.

Results

The majority of the respondents scored average knowledge on all three sub-scales: general knowledge, insulin use and total knowledge, with an overall score of $63.1 \pm 14, 2\%$. Major knowledge gaps were in areas related to diet, insulin use and glycaemic control. No significant differences in mean scores were detected in the diabetes knowledge sub-scales when comparisons were made of mean knowledge scores in relation to socio-demographic and diabetes-related characteristics. However, diabetes-related complications were significantly associated with lower total and general diabetes knowledge, and female gender was an independent determinant of low general knowledge.