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The impact of a short educational course and clinical practice guidelines on knowledge and attitude of primary care physicians toward diabetes

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Introduction:

Studies demonstrate shortfalls in the quality of care provided by primary care physicians (PCPs) for diabetic patients. CME that addresses provider attitudes toward diabetes and updating knowledge to promote adherence to standards of care may be helpful. The aim of this study was to evaluate the impact of short educational course and clinical practice guidelines (CPG) on knowledge and attitude of PCPs toward diabetes.

Methods:

We enrolled 80 PCPs attending a five-day course (15 hours), supplemented with CPG on diabetes care. We also surveyed the participants to assess their attitudes toward diabetes. Knowledge was assessed by multiple choice questions and short essay questions. Attitudes were assessed using the Diabetes Attitudes Scale-3 (DAS-3). Data were collected for the participants before and after the interventional course.

Results:

Mean baseline knowledge score was 73.28±10.13 %. The score increased significantly to 88.16±6.97 % ($p<0.0001$) following the intervention. Regarding the attitude, only 67 and 56 participated in the pre- and post-course questionnaire and 41 answered both. Overall, PCPs had a positive attitude toward all the five subscales in the pre- and post-course. Following the course, PCPs had significantly more positive attitudes on three of five DAS subscales, with a statistically significant improvement in attitude regarding seriousness of DM ($P=0.001$), need for special training ($p<0.05$), and patient autonomy ($p<0.05$). There was no improvement in value of tight glucose control and psychosocial impact of diabetes subscales.

Conclusions:

A short educational course and clinical practice guidelines for diabetes care resulted in an improvement in knowledge and attitude of PCPs toward diabetes. These findings demonstrate that these interventions have the potential to improve the quality of care provided by PCPs for diabetic patients.

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