

Nova Scotia's Provincial Approach to Self-Monitoring of Blood Glucose

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As a provincial program, the Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia (DCPNS) has the ability to reach across all 9 District Health Authorities (DHAs) with initiatives aimed at improving the care of persons with diabetes (DM). Standardized approaches and consistency in messaging assist both provider groups and individuals living with DM

In NS, self-monitoring of blood glucose (SMBG) in non-insulin using diabetes (DM) is a hot topic. Variable approaches to SMBG across and within provider groups, as highlighted in a local study, and limited/unavailable evidence in support of testing for some populations; as well as escalating costs for persons with DM (pwDM) and the health care system have brought this issue to the fore.

Engaging health care provider representatives (physicians, pharmacists, and nurses and dietitians [diabetes educators]) from each of the DHAs through discussion, dialogue, and consensus building has led to the development of a simple decision tool. This tool assists DM care providers in objectively determining the need for, and frequency of, SMBG in non-insulin using type 2 DM.

This tool guides, and focuses, group discussion and individual decision on issues of greatest concern when considering SMBG. Four key areas of consideration include safety (risks of hyper- or hypoglycemia); appropriate/timely action based on SMBG results by Health Care Team (HCT); the individual's knowledge, skills, and willingness to test, record, and act on results; and self-management education. This simple tool is color coded to reinforce key concepts, prompts yes/no responses to key questions, and ensures consideration is given to issues that may impact the decision to SMBG. Examples of low and high intensity testing are provided.

The tool is accompanied by two videos—one to support the necessity for such a decision tool and the other provides the “how to use” the tool.

The tool is currently being deployed across Nova Scotia and interdisciplinary collaboration has been the key to this success. Partners, including among others, Dalhousie University Continuing Medical Education and the College of Pharmacy, have included the tool in academic detailing programs and have worked with the DCPNS to develop and deliver interdisciplinary education programs across NS.

Oral presentation at Canadian Public Health Association Conference, Montreal, PQ (June 19 to 22, 2011)

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Objective:

As a provincial program, the Diabetes Care Program of Nova Scotia (DCPNS) has the ability to reach across all District Health Authorities (DHAs) with initiatives aimed at improving care of persons with diabetes (DM). Standardized approaches and consistency in messaging assist provider groups and individuals living with DM. In NS, self-monitoring of blood glucose (SMBG) in non-insulin using DM presented itself as a topic that needed attention.

This presentation will:

- Profile the role of DCPNS and its strategic partnerships in knowledge translation.
- Highlight the need for a more consistent, objective approach to SMBG.
- Describe the processes for development/deployment of a simple decision tool for healthcare providers in NS.

Target Groups:

Policy makers, front-line care providers, program developers, and knowledge translators.

Activities:

DCPNS and an interdisciplinary group of NS healthcare providers developed and refined a simple decision tool to assist DM-care providers in objectively determining the need for, and frequency of, SMBG in non-insulin using type 2 DM.

Two videos accompany the tool—one provide the context and local support for such a tool and the other provides details on “how to use” the tool using case studies.

The tool was deployed across Nova Scotia using a number of different venues and forums; interdisciplinary collaboration was key to this successful deployment.

Deliverables:

- A simple knowledge translation tool, developed to meet the local context.
- Accompanying media supports to enhance understanding and uptake into local practice settings.
- Partnerships that demonstrate true collaboration.