

Title

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Diabetes Nurses in Europe: A pan-European Survey

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is caused by the severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2). This highly infectious virus presented a significant global health hazard; initially identified in December 2019, the World Health Organisation declared a pandemic in March 2020. The speed at which it spread led to a significant disruption in everyday life, and the ensuing morbidity and mortality created immense strain on healthcare systems and healthcare providers.

For people living with diabetes, COVID-19 created additional challenges. Diabetes nurses were ideally placed to provide insights on these challenges. In collaboration with FEND, the diabetes research team at the Florence Nightingale Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Palliative Care in King's College London set out to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on people with diabetes and the delivery of diabetes care across Europe. Drawing on established networks a FEND COVID19 consortium was established with diabetes nurses from 22 countries across Europe. Using a rapid Delphi method an online survey was developed. The lead for each country supported the translation of the survey and it was disseminated via national networks using mailing lists and social media.

This survey has revealed invaluable insights into the provision of diabetes care during the pandemic. Diabetes nurses across Europe are a highly experienced and educated workforce and resource for diabetes care and provision. These data could support strategies for diabetes care in any future wave of COVID-19. The response to the survey has also highlighted the goodwill among diabetes nurses across Europe to work together for the benefit of those living with diabetes.

Biography

Rita Forde is a Research Fellow at the Faculty of Nursing, Midwifery and Palliative Care at King's College London. She was awarded a Doctoral Fellowship from the Foundation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND) and completed a PhD at King's College London (2017). Prior to this, Rita was an Advanced Nurse Practitioner with the diabetes team at the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, Dublin. In addition to her General Nursing and Midwifery training, she completed a BSc, MSc (ANP) and Higher Diploma (Diabetes Nursing) at University College Dublin and a certificate in Nurse Prescribing at the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin.