

FEND Conference 2021

Prof Angus Forbes

Type 1 Diabetes in Older People- how can we meet the needs of this growing population?

Abstract:

People with Type 1 diabetes are living longer and surviving into older age, in Western societies. Life-expectancy for people with Type 1 diabetes is approaching the population average. It is also important to note that the incidence of Type 1 diabetes continues throughout adult life, extending into old age. While increasing longevity should be appreciated, older age can bring multiple new challenges for older people with Type 1 diabetes. Additional hazards associated with older age for people with Type 1 diabetes, include: hypoglycaemia; diminished cognitive function; and comorbid load.

Hypoglycaemia is a very important hazard as it is associated with falls in older people which can lead to fractures and hospitalisation. The incidence of hypoglycaemia in older people with Type 1 diabetes is high and of particular concern is the high level of severe hypoglycaemia. Cognitive impairment is another potentially important hazard which again could lead to insulin errors and hypoglycaemia. Comorbidities are also more prevalent in older people with Type 1 diabetes, and these may impact on mental and physical function as well as quality of life. The number of older people with Type 1 diabetes requiring carers or admission to residential care is also increasing and maintaining a balance between a person's autonomy in executing their diabetes self-management and the need for third-party support can be difficult to navigate. Similarly, helping older people to adjust to different approaches for glucose levels can also be difficult, as many will have had a routine throughout their lives. In this talk we will explore how some of these challenges might be addressed and how diabetes care needs to evolve to address the needs of this growing population.

BIOG:

Professor Angus Forbes holds the FEND Chair of Clinical Diabetes Nursing at King's College London and has an honorary post as a specialist diabetes nurse at King's College Hospital. Prof Forbes is an active researcher with multiple publications in diabetes, some current and previous projects include: a pan European survey of diabetes nurses on the impact of COVID-19; diabetes

prevention in women with GDM; preconception care in women with Type 2 diabetes; evaluating a psychologically modelled education intervention for young people with Type 1 diabetes; developing supportive interventions for adults with new-onset Type 1 diabetes; the relationship between cognitive impairment and diabetic retinopathy; glycaemic variability and mortality and older people with diabetes; the impact of lipohypertrophy on glucose variation in people with Type 1 diabetes; and a trial of virtual clinics to improve primary care based diabetes outcomes.

Clinically Angus runs a motivational enhancement clinic for people with Type 1 diabetes. He also leads on the diabetes MSc programme and has a number of funded PhD students. He has contributed to national guidelines for older people in hospital, end-of-life-care; and dementia care for people with diabetes. Angus is a past vice-president of the International Diabetes Federation, and his previous positions include: senior lecturer in diabetes at King's College London; a lecturer in health services research at University College London Medical School; and a health visitor and district nurse in East London.