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Self-care of People with Type 2 Diabetes During the COVID Pandemic: A Qualitative Interpretive Description

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Aim

To explore and describe the **experience of self-care** of people with T2DM during the **COVID-19 pandemic**

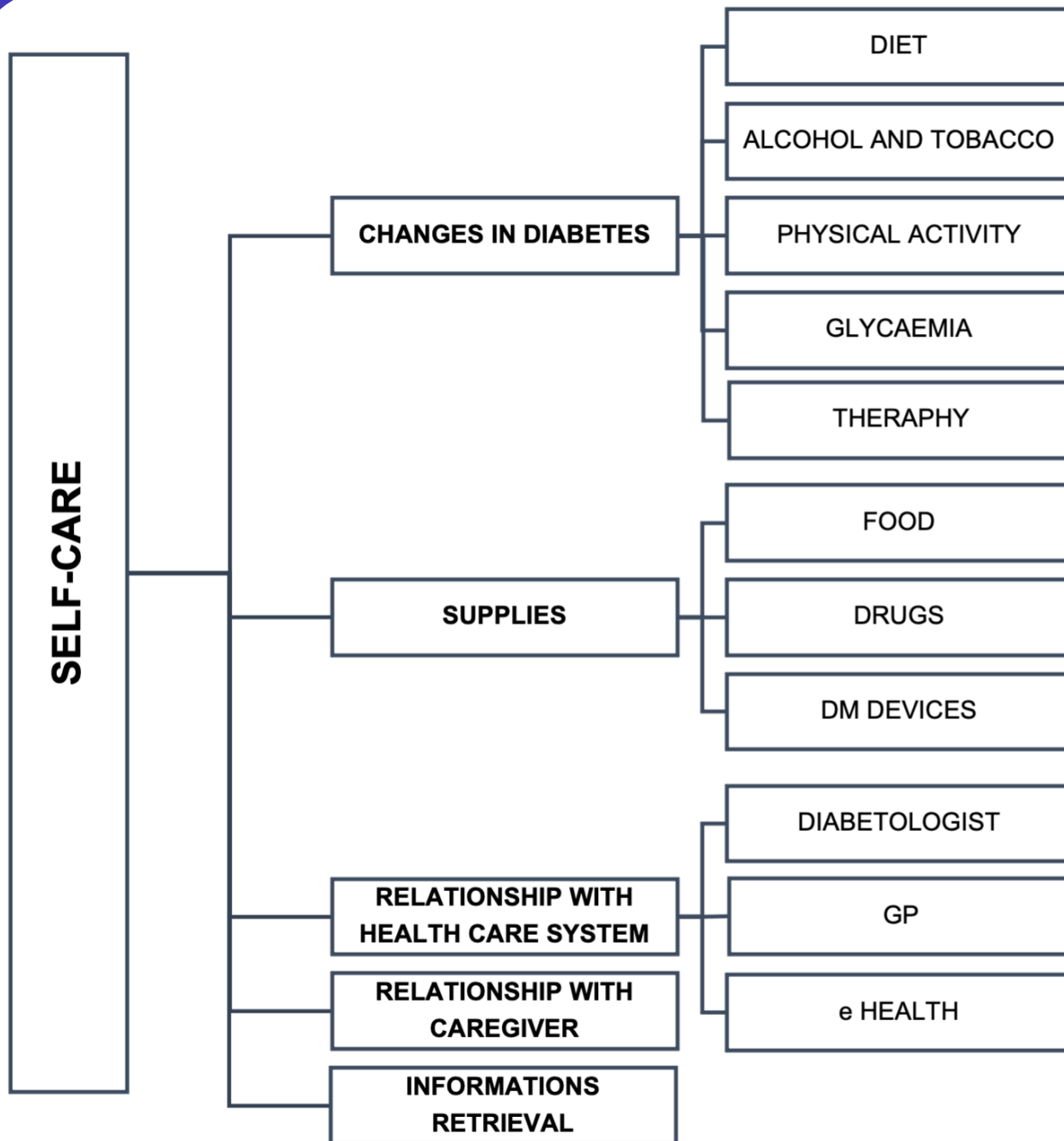
Methods

Qualitative **Interpretive Description** (Thorne, 2016).

Data collected with **semi-structured interviews** and analysed inductively in accordance with Interpretive Description criteria.

The **sample (n=30)** was purposefully selected and composed of seven women and 23 men, mean age 69.9 years old (60–77) and 19.4 mean years (3–40) of living with T2DM.

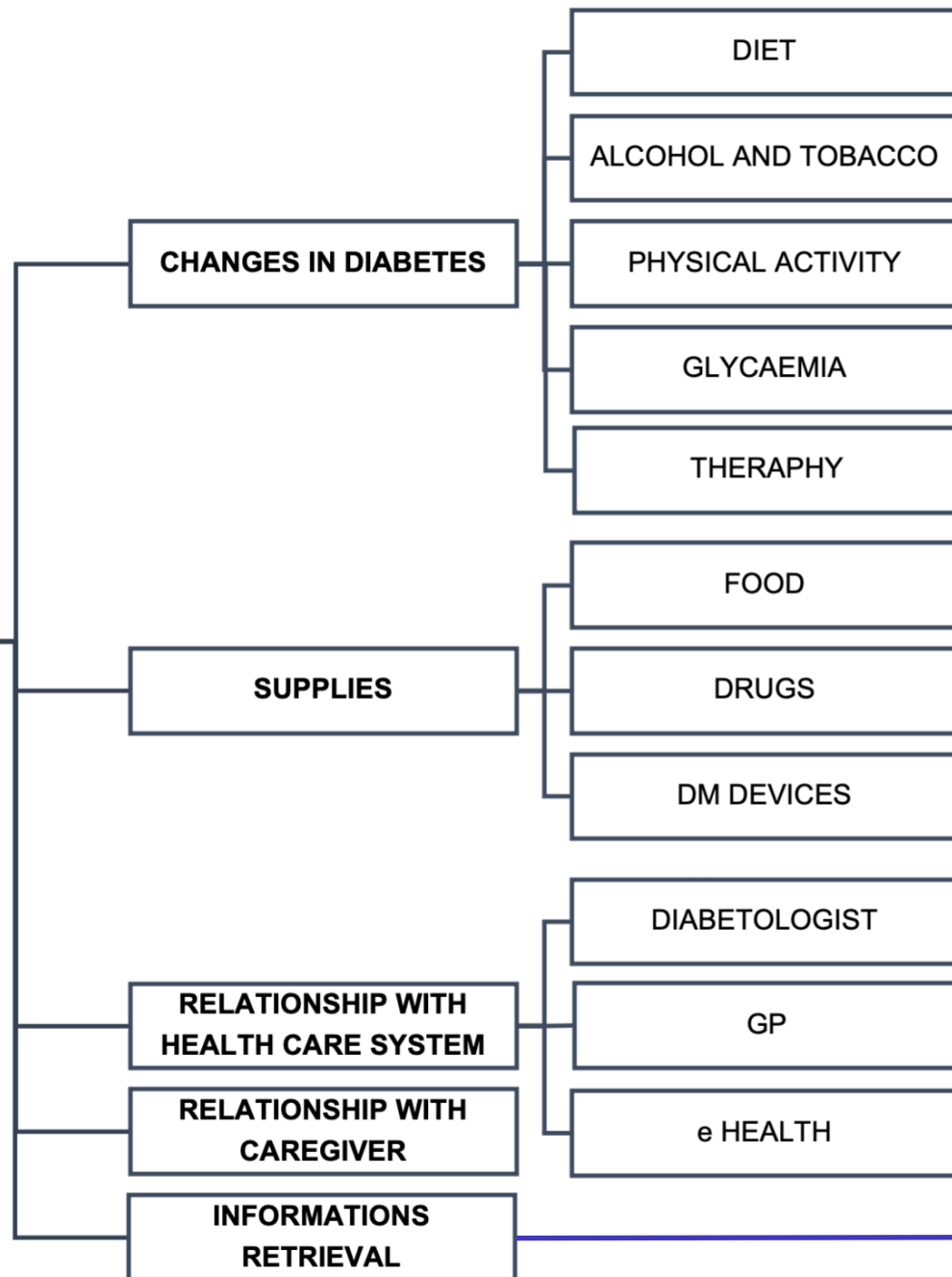
Results



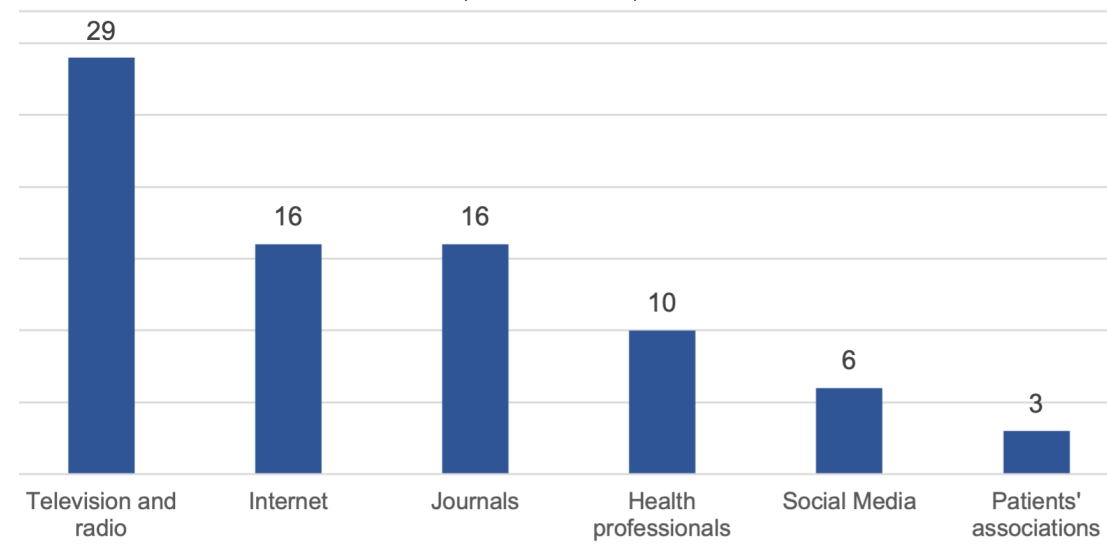
Many participants **reduced physical activity levels** and **increased smoking and alcohol consumption**. Some took time for **meal prepping** and better eating, and some increased food consumption and **stress eating**. These factors, with greater stress and anxiety, caused **worsening of glycaemic values**. Supplies were hard for participants to procure. Many chose **online shopping** for food and electronic prescriptions were used for drugs. In some cases, **insulin was not available** and participants borrowed it from other patients using informal network. The **closure of diabetes centres** and the **lack of reference points** forced people who could afford it to turn to private healthcare. Others, even when diabetes complications arose, were **not able to receive care** or advice for a long time. Those who contacted a healthcare professional often did so via **e-health** or telephone.

Results

SELF-CARE



Methods of information retrieval (n=30)
multiple answers possible



Conclusion

Participants struggled both in diabetes self-care and access to services. They advised for a **diabetes case manager**, **continuity of care**, and **patients' empowerment**. Supplies of food, drugs, and diabetes-related devices were a concern. Technology and eHealth were useful but only for the minority capable of using them. Developing **advanced nurse-led community services** could solve many issues reported in this study, during and after the pandemic.