

THE ROLE OF DIABETES SPECIALIST NURSES IN ENHANCING HEALTH LITERACY AND SELF-MANAGEMENT IN T2DM

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Background

Limited health literacy (HL) is associated with poor diabetes knowledge, reduced treatment adherence, inadequate self-care behaviors and suboptimal glycemic control in people with Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM). Community nurses and Diabetes Specialist Nurses (DSNs) may contribute to overcoming these barriers.

Aim

To explore the role of community nurses and DSNs in enhancing health literacy and promoting self-management among individuals with T2DM.

Method

A narrative literature review was conducted using international electronic databases and publications from scientific organizations. Studies, guidelines and review papers related to health literacy, community nursing, diabetes specialist nursing, self-management and T2DM were included.

Results

Limited HL is common among people with T2DM and is associated with poor medication adherence, unhealthy dietary behaviors, reduced self-care and poorer glycemic outcomes. Community nurses and DSNs improve HL through individualized education, teach-back techniques, plain-language communication, visual educational materials and patient-centered counselling. These interventions enhance self-efficacy, promote active participation in self-management and support lifestyle modification. Nurses also act as care coordinators and patient advocates within the community.

Conclusion

Health literacy is an important determinant of successful diabetes self-management. Community nurses and DSNs play a central role in identifying literacy barriers and implementing tailored educational interventions. Integrating HL assessment and effective communication strategies into routine diabetes care may improve patient outcomes and strengthen community-based diabetes management.