

Other Abstracts

Enhancing Diabetes Seniors' Health via Tele-diabetes Education Pilot Program

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Introduction:

Diabetes is a common chronic disease and is also one of the major causes of morbidity and mortality of senior citizens. Senior diabetics are prone to develop complications, to reduce the prevalence of them, it is important to motivate and empower the senior diabetics to have better knowledge and control in diabetes. Building on Senior Citizen Home Safety Association's (SCHSA) experience in tele-care service to seniors, it is believed that repeated reminders through phone calls may serve the purposes of educating seniors and motivating changes in living habit and behavior. Thus, a tele-diabetes education pilot program was conducted to test its effectiveness.

Purpose of the Program:

Enhancing senior diabetics' knowledge in diabetes and strengthening their ability in managing the disease through tele-education.

Methodology:

10 SCHSA's staff and volunteers were trained as tele-educators with knowledge of diabetes by registered nurses in mid 2008. 100 Personal Emergency Link diabetic users aged 65-80 were recruited and matched to the tele-educators. Education materials with assessment scores were designed for 8 phone calls in 5-6 months:

Intervention Week	Content	Interviewing Question
1 st	diet control	Pre-test
3 rd	exercise	
5 th	foot care	
7 th	symptoms, management of high / low blood glucose level	
9 th	medication	
13 th	content review	/
17 th		
21 st	/	Post-test

Results:

The self-reported diabetes knowledge levels of the 100 participants were interviewed through structured telephone survey, 85 questionnaires were completed. The result demonstrated a significant improvement in diabetes knowledge level of the participants ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusions:

Continuous and repeated tele-education to seniors serves to be an effective, convenience and well-accepted education means. Though the living habit of the elders required further exploration and to be proved in our next phase of tele-education program, we believe that by means of elder-centered service approach, a healthy and happy ageing in the community can be realized.