

The Novel Diabetes Psychosocial Assessment Tool (DPAT) in young adults with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D): Development, Implementation and Outcomes.

Background

Type 1 Diabetes (T1D) is a complex, chronic condition requiring knowledge and skills to attain competent self-management. Achieving optimal glycaemia is important to prevent the significant burden of complications. It is known that T1D in adolescence and early adulthood results in a significant impact on emotional and mental health, with diabetes distress in upto 32%.

Approach

The Diabetes Psychosocial Assessment Tool (DPAT) is a world-first, all comprehensive, diabetes-specific psychosocial screening tool which has been developed at the Mater Hospital out of clinical need. It assesses diabetes distress, depression and anxiety symptoms, social support, financial concerns, fear of hypoglycaemia, body image and eating concerns in young adults with Type 1 Diabetes. It was developed after review of all available evidenced-based literature, multi-disciplinary team input and expert national stakeholder consultation.

Outcome

Through clinical audits at our Diabetes Service, the tool has been shown to be feasible and acceptable with 100% uptake (Internal Medicine Journal, 2020). In addition, a recent observational study reveals an improvement in diabetes distress/symptoms of depression and anxiety following the implementation of the tool and its recommended referral pathways (Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice Journal, 2023).

Innovation and Significance

Due to this finding, it has now been adopted by the Queensland Diabetes Clinical Network and is available through the Queensland Clinical Excellence Website. It has also been embedded as the step one process in the National Guideline for the Assessment and Management of Disordered Eating and Eating Disorders in Children, Adolescents and Adults with Type 1 Diabetes (endorsed and published by the Australian Diabetes Society in 2024, Australia New Zealand Paediatric Endocrine and Diabetes Society in 2023). It has also been embedded in the Queensland Transition Model from Paediatric to Adult Diabetes Service. It is seeking a greater awareness and uptake.