

To Access the Knowledge, Awareness and Factors Associated With Diabetes Mellitus in Buea, Cameroon

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Abstract : This is a chronic metabolic disorder which is a fast-growing global problem with a huge social, health, and economic consequences. It is estimated that in 2010 there were globally 285 million people (approximately 6.4% of the adult population) suffering from this disease. This number is estimated to increase to 430 million in the absence of better control or cure. An ageing population and obesity are two main reasons for the increase. Diabetes mellitus is a chronic heterogeneous metabolic disorder with a complex pathogenesis. It is characterized by elevated blood glucose levels or hyperglycemia, which results from abnormalities in either insulin secretion or insulin action or both. Hyperglycemia manifests in various forms with a varied presentation and results in carbohydrate, fat, and protein metabolic dysfunctions. Long-term hyperglycemia often leads to various microvascular and macrovascular diabetic complications, which are mainly responsible for diabetes-associated morbidity and mortality. Hyperglycemia serves as the primary biomarker for the diagnosis of diabetes as well. Furthermore, it has been shown that almost 50% of the putative diabetics are not diagnosed until 10 years after onset of the disease, hence the real prevalence of global diabetes must be astronomically high. This study was conducted in a locality to access the level of knowledge, awareness and risk factors associated with people leaving with diabetes mellitus. A month before the screening was to be conducted, a health screening in some selected churches and on the local community radio as well as on relevant WhatsApp groups were advertised. A general health talk was delivered by the head of the screening unit to all attendees who were all educated on the procedure to be carried out with benefits and any possible discomforts after which the attendee's consent was obtained. Evaluation of the participants for any leads to the diabetes selected for the screening was done by taking adequate history and physical examinations such as excessive thirst, increased urination, tiredness, hunger, unexplained weight loss, feeling irritable or having other mood changes, having blurry vision, having slow-healing sores, getting a lot of infections, such as gum, skin and vaginal infections. Out of the 94 participants the finding show that 78 were females and 16 were males, 70.21% of participants with diabetes were between the ages of 60-69yrs. The study found that only 10.63% of respondents declared a good level of knowledge of diabetes. Out of 3 symptoms of diabetes analyzed in this study, high blood sugar (58.5%) and chronic fatigue (36.17%) were the most recognized. Out of 4 diabetes risk factors analyzed in this study, obesity (21.27%) and unhealthy diet (60.63%) were the most recognized diabetes risk factors, while only 10.6% of respondents indicated tobacco use. The diabetic foot was the most recognized diabetes complication (50.57%), but some the participants indicated vision problems (30.8%), or cardiovascular diseases (20.21%) as diabetes complications.

Keywords : diabetes mellitus, non communicable disease, general health talk, hyperglycemia

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