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Diabetes control and management among South Asian and White men and women

Background UK research into HbA_{1c} levels in South Asians with diabetes compared to native Whites has found mixed results.

Aims To investigate diabetes control, support systems and barriers to diabetes management in South Asian and White adult outpatients with diabetes from Hillingdon Hospital (Middlesex).

Method Ethical committee approval was obtained and 585 South Asians (SA) and 230 Whites (W) were selected and invited to participate. Three most recent HbA_{1c} readings were accessed for each consenting patient (SA = 56; W = 52) the majority of whom, had Type 2 diabetes. Interviews were conducted with a sub-sample of White (n=8) and South Asian (n=12) volunteers.

Results ANOVA revealed a significant interaction between gender and ethnicity affecting the most recent HbA_{1c} ($F(1,117) = 4.119, p < 0.05$) with worse glycaemic control in South Asian women. Overall South Asians with Type 2 diabetes had a significantly lower age of diagnosis compared to Whites (44.12 ± 10.591 vs 52.42 ± 14.05 years, $p < 0.01$). Analysis of interviews revealed some important differences in diabetes management.

Conclusion These findings suggest how diabetes management interventions might be targeted more effectively.