

KNOWLEDGE OF SELF-CARE AMONG TYPE 2
DIABETES PATIENTS AT HOSPITAL TUANKU FAUZIAH,
PERLIS, MALAYSIA



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ABSTRACT

Background: Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) affects 1 out of 5 Malaysians aged 30-year-old. Alarming, glycemic control remains poor among patients with T2DM. Diabetes self-care warrants in-depth exploration given that it plays integral role in achieving good blood glucose control.

Objectives: This study aims to (1) assess self-care knowledge among patients with T2DM; (2) explore factors affecting diabetes self-care knowledge; (3) determine relationship of self-care knowledge and glycemic control and (4) solicit patients' opinions on the difficulties and helpful aspects in managing diabetes.

Methods: A cross sectional survey was conducted for 3 months at Medical Outpatient Department (MOPD) at Hospital Tuanku Fauziah (HTF) by administering pre-validated questionnaires among patients diagnosed with T2DM. Patients who met the study inclusion and exclusion criteria were consented before participating in the study.

Results: A total of 220 questionnaires were completed and returned. The median total score for diabetes self-care knowledge was 22.50 (IQR 6) with the score range of 10 to 30. More than half of the respondents (64.5%) scored high knowledge (70% or above). The median percentage of total knowledge scores was 75 (IQR 20). Our findings showed that respondents' diabetes self-care knowledge scores were significantly different with the level of education ($p < 0.001$),

occupation status ($p < 0.001$) and monthly household income ($p < 0.001$). The knowledge score was also significantly correlated with the duration of having diabetes mellitus ($r = 0.151$, $p = 0.025$). A significant but weak negative correlation between diabetes self-care knowledge and current HbA_{1c} ($r = -0.239$, $p < 0.001$) was noted. Higher self-care knowledge level was found to have better glycaemic control.

Conclusion: Self-care knowledge level were generally high. However, several self-care knowledge gaps remained in patients with T2DM. Measures must be taken by the healthcare professionals to enhance the identified diabetes self-care knowledge weaknesses.

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