

Exploring the footcare and footwear practices of persons living with type 2 diabetes and their spousal influences – A research proposal for a qualitative descriptive inquiry



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Introduction

- Diabetes-related complications incur high-cost to the health care system, affecting mortality and quality of life.
- Diabetes Canada reports direct healthcare cost of \$3.8 billion in 2020, rising to \$4.9 billion by the year 2030¹.
- An integrated footcare approach can prevent up to 75% of foot ulcer², yet many people with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) do not engage in preventative footcare.
- An understanding of how adults care for their feet and choose footwear needs to be explored.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research proposal is to explore the footcare and footwear practices of people with T2DM focusing on illness beliefs, self-efficacy, depression, and spousal influence on self-care decisions.

Literature Review

Self-efficacy

“Perceived self-efficacy is an important factor for successful performance of self management and a fundamentally required skill to perform it.”³

Illness beliefs

“ Many patients with T2DM do not seem to perceive their conditions to be serious and postpone lifestyle changes until diabetes-related complications occur.”⁴

Depression

Diabetes and depression are often associated co-morbid conditions, with a depression incidence of 20-40% in persons with T2DM.⁵

Spousal Influence

“Spouses’ attitude and behaviour influenced the patients’ own. This would suggest that engaging spouses/significant others in foot care behaviour education may improve foot care behaviour and clinical and psychosocial outcomes.”⁶
“Action cues indicated that participants who received recommendations from family, friends or health professionals were 5.27 times more likely to perform daily foot exams.”⁷



Figure 1. Literature Review Themes

Methods

The study will utilize a qualitative descriptive research method

Inclusion Criteria:

- Adults 18+ years with T2DM with spouse/partner
- Without foot ulceration(s)

Data Collection:

- Four people with T2DM and their spouses/partners
- Semi- structured 1:2 interview based upon pre-determined questions to guide the discussion
- Interviews will be audiotaped through in-person, phone, or virtual session
- Data will be recorded and transcribed verbatim



Data Analysis

Data analysis will be completed using thematic analysis, defined as “a method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a dataset.”⁸

Clinical Relevance

The study findings will:

- Contribute to understanding participants’ decisions around preventative footcare and footwear based on self-efficacy, illness beliefs, depression, and spousal support.
- Provide an understanding of why and how people with diabetes and their spouses engage in footcare and footwear practices leading to individualized, effective education strategies improving clinical outcomes.
- Results will potentially influence the design and delivery of educational programs for people with T2DM and their spouses.
- Contribute to the identification of the indirect cost associated with caring for someone with T2DM including loss of productivity of the spouse.
- Assist spouses with gaining recognition as care providers by government and healthcare agencies.

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