OP JSNA Factsheet 8: Diabetes

Summary

Prevalence rates of Type 2 diabetes are increasing, in line with rising obesity rates. People with diabetes are more likely to be admitted to hospital and have longer stays than people of the same age without the condition. Around 56% of those with diabetes in Southwark are on primary care disease registers. Detection needs to be scaled up. Integrated care and specialist teams can reduce complications and improve outcomes.

Definitions

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Hyperglycaemia, or raised blood sugar, is a common effect of uncontrolled diabetes and over time leads to serious damage to many of the body's systems, especially the nerves and blood vessels.

The local picture

The main risk factor for Type 2 diabetes is obesity. Prevalence rates are increasing in line with rising obesity rates. People with Diabetes have increased death rates. Diabetes is also an independent risk factor for cardiac disease and is related to long term control of blood sugar. Complications of diabetes include serious eye, kidney and nerve complications which are minimised through blood sugar control.

Although 10,945 people were recorded on Southwark diabetes registers in 2009/10, it has been estimated that up to 19,530 people may have diabetes (56% of expected numbers (all ages)). A modelled estimate for older people is not currently available for comparison. There are a high number of emergency admissions resulting from diabetes and these are high cost, see Unplanned Care Factsheet.

What we know about what works

Specialist diabetes inpatient teams can improve outcomes for patients and generate savings that substantially outweigh the cost of such teams.

Local Action

Diabetic control is measured using HbA1c levels a measure of control in the preceding three months. HbA1c control improved markedly in Southwark during 2010/11. Southwark GP practices achieved HbA1c levels of 8% or less in 63.5% of their diabetic patients, compared to 67.0% in London and 69.9% in England. See Prevention Factsheet 10 for further information on work to tackle obesity.