

Abstract (No numbers, 6th Oct submission deadline 300 words)

Understanding lifestyle contribution in the management of type 2 diabetes among African immigrants living in the UK

Background: Diabetes is a global public health issue that is affecting more than 422 million people. In the UK, diabetes is estimated to be affecting more than 4 million people. However, studies have shown that ethnic minority groups are at higher risk of developing diabetes. African immigrants have been reported to be three times at risk of developing diabetes than the White population in the UK. In addition to the higher prevalence, African immigrants have also been reported to have poorer health outcomes than the general population in the UK.

Method: A mixed method approach was conducted to investigate the management of diabetes among selected West African immigrants living with diabetes in the UK. Participants were recruited using purposive and snowballing sampling techniques from diabetes support groups across London. Fifteen individual interviews were conducted; transcribed and analysed using grounded theory methodology. A quantitative survey was conducted to further explore the management of diabetes among African immigrants. However, this presentation is focused only on the qualitative findings.

Result: Participants in this study reported challenges that they encounter in the management of their diabetes. Categories on lifestyle factors like Pre-diabetes self, maintaining change in the UK, living with diabetes, being open and accepting permanent change were reported. Comparisons were made between experiences in the UK and experiences in West Africa before migration. Although they reported on better access to treatment and medication in the UK than in West Africa, there was still difficulty in self-manage their diabetes.

Conclusion: West African immigrants living with diabetes in the UK need to achieve better diabetes management regime, however, there is the need to go beyond healthy lifestyle recommendation programmes. A more robust support system and tailored intervention to accommodate cultural expectations of this group are urgently required.