

Dietetic and educational interventions improve clinical outcomes of diabetic and obese clients with intellectual and/or mental disability

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Aim: We evaluated the effect of dietetic and educational interventions for clients with type 2 diabetes or obesity with concurrent intellectual and/or mental disability.

Methods: A retrospective audit of medical records and databases for clients of Sefton Park Primary Health Care receiving Health Access Team services and living in Supported Residential Facilities was undertaken. Clinical outcomes included weight, BMI and glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) levels from the initial and most recent intervention.

Results: 91 clients were included (type 2 diabetes = 47, obesity-only = 44). All but one had schizophrenia, an intellectual disability or other psychological condition. The diabetic sub-group showed significant ($P=0.001$) decreases in weight (mean 3.7kg) and BMI (mean 1.4kg/m²) and a non-significant ($P=0.07$) decrease in HbA1c (mean 0.5%) over time. The obesity-only sub-group had no significant change in outcomes. The presence of schizophrenia and refusal of intervention(s) had a significant negative impact. A significant positive impact was seen for a greater total number of attendances to a dietitian or diabetes educator ($P\leq 0.024$).

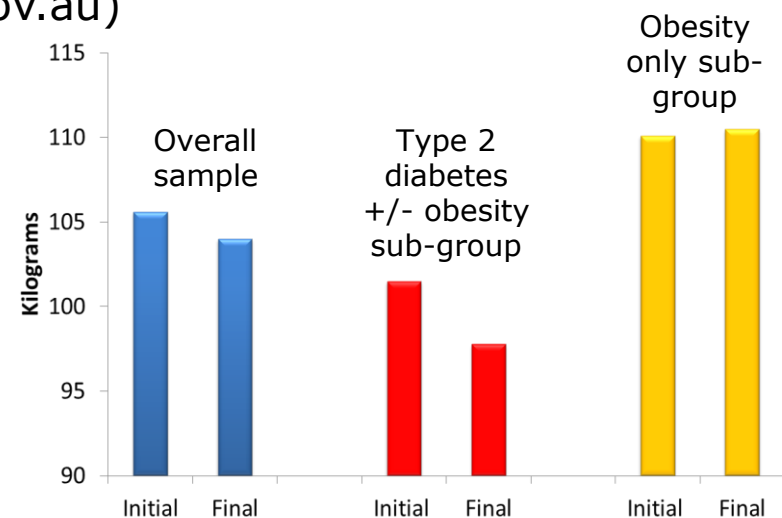


Figure 1. Change in body weight.

Conclusions: This study provides new evidence to support the effectiveness of dietetic and educational interventions for a particularly vulnerable client group.

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