JOINT COMMISSION™

Evidence-Based Intervention Related to: Diabetes

Title	Impact of Peer Health Coaching on Glycemic Control in Low-Income Patients With Diabetes: A Randomized Controlled Trial
Author	Thom et al., 2013
Aim	Public safety-net health clinics located on the West coast tested the impact of individual peer coaching on glucose control.
Study Design	Randomized controlled trial
Population	Low-income patients with poorly controlled diabetes
Sample Size	299 (Intervention arm n=148, Control arm n=151)
Intervention	The peer coaching intervention required peer coaches to attend 26 hours of training over 8 weeks that included instruction in active listening and nonjudgmental communication, assisting with diabetes management skills, providing social and emotional support, helping with lifestyle change, facilitating medication understanding and adherence, navigating the clinic, and accessing community resources. A primary goal of the peer coaches was to help patients design an action plan to achieve their healthcare goals. Participants randomly assigned to the peer coaching group interacted with peer coaches at their discretion either by telephone or during a clinic visit. Coaches contacted participants in the intervention group at least twice per month and at two or more clinic visits over 6 months. Participants assigned to the usual care group had access to all services typically provided to patients (e.g., access to a nutritionist and diabetes educator through referral from their primary care physician).
Results	After 6 months, HbA1c levels were lower in the coached (v. usual care) group.
Conclusion	This study demonstrates that peer health coaching can improve diabetes control in low-income patients.