

# New Territories West Cluster



## Patient Empowerment - the Key to Successful Management of Diabetes Mellitus

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### Introduction

Diabetes is a very common chronic disease with significant morbidity and mortality. Active patient participation and partnership with healthcare professionals are keys to good disease control and attainment of optimal outcomes. Patients' self-management knowledge and skills in taking care of their own diseases can be enhanced through patient empowerment.

### Objectives

To produce a series of patient education pamphlets tailor-made for diabetic patients in Tuen Mun Hospital Family Medicine Specialist Clinic, with special emphasis on different areas of diabetic care, and patient self-care card for patients to raise their awareness of the importance of self-monitoring of their diabetic control.

### Methodology

Important areas for patient empowerment were discussed among clinic staff. Patient empowerment pack was designed in a user-friendly way and according to patient's clinical needs, so as to maximize the chances of get the message across. The educational materials were piloted on a small group of patients, and the finalized version was distributed to suitable patients.

The patient empowerment pack consists of the following:



- A) Patient Education Pamphlet
  - provide easy-to-understand information on different topics
  - Life style: Diet, exercise



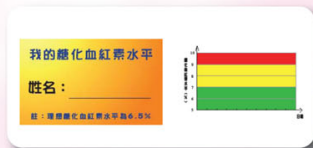
- Use of medications and side effects



- Monitoring of disease: importance of HbA1c, home h'stix monitoring



- B) An HbA1C Card: for patient to have a handy record of their past HbA1c level, as a means of self-monitoring and reminder of treatment target.



- C) Diabetes Mellitus Education Board



### Result

The patient empowerment pack has gone down well with the target patients. They specifically appreciated the use of big fonts for easy reading, the relevance of the information, and the handiness of the pamphlets. The clinical outcome also showed improvement.

In Jan-March 2010, the average HbA1C of patients followed the natural course and gradually deteriorated when compared with figures 1 year ago ( HbA1C 7.88 ➔ 8.02). The average LDL deteriorated when compared with figures 1 year ago (LDL 3.18 ➔3.2).

In Oct-Dec 2010, the average HbA1C improved when compared with figures 1 year ago (HbA1C 8.12 ➔ 7.86). The proportion of patients with improved HbA1C also increased from 41% to 68%. The average LDL also improved (3.17 ➔ 3.05).

### Conclusion

Patient empowerment is the key to success in managing chronic illnesses. Our team took the initiative to produce tailor-made patient empowerment materials that best serve the needs of our patients. It is hoped that with concerted effort from clinicians and patients, we can effectively manage diabetes mellitus and reduce the occurrence of complications, morbidity and mortality. We specifically thank the NTWC Patient Empowerment Fund for its generous sponsorship which made this project possible.