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PREVENTIVE HEALTH IN A CHANGING WORLD

KNOWLEDGE, PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES IN CHRONIC DISEASE SELF-MANAGEMENT: A COMMUNITY BASED STUDY IN QUEENSTOWN, SINGAPORE

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Background

With a rapidly ageing population, the prevalence of chronic disease in Singapore is increasing. In recent years, the Ministry of Health has placed a greater emphasis on empowering individuals to manage their chronic diseases and prevent complications.

Methods

We studied knowledge, perspectives and competency of chronic disease self-management in Queenstown residents using several tools, including the Partners-in-Health (PIH) score. Door-to-door standardized surveys were conducted with Singaporeans and PRs aged 40 and above diagnosed with at least one of the following chronic conditions: Hypertension, Hyperlipidemia and Diabetes Mellitus.

Results

A total of 502 respondents were recruited. The mean PIH score of our study population was 73, out of a maximum of 96. Higher socioeconomic status and better lifestyle habits were associated with a higher PIH score. Comparing between 314 participants following-up with polyclinics and 106 participants following-up with GP clinics, we found no statistically significant difference between PIH and knowledge scores. While satisfaction with primary care was high on the whole, polyclinic patients were twice as likely to experience dissatisfaction with their care provider, with long waiting time cited as the most common reason for dissatisfaction.

Conclusion

Our study illustrates the factors associated with good chronic disease self-management. These findings have implications on healthcare planning and highlights potential areas of improvement. While our study population demographics closely mirrors the typical population of Singaporeans who have chronic diseases, further studies should be carried out on a nationwide scale to determine the veracity of our findings.