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Experiences of diabetes self-management: A focus group study among men and women with type 2 diabetes, in a rural area in Vhembe district, Limpopo province, South Africa

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The aim of the study was to explore self-management experiences of men and women with Type 2 diabetes mellitus, in a rural area. Exploratory qualitative design was used. Data was collected from 35 individuals (men and women) aged 40 to 65 years with type 2 diabetes mellitus. Five focus groups were conducted to collect data and participants attended local health services for their diabetes care. The size of focus groups ranged from four to eight individuals and all were recorded, transcribed and analyzed. Data were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach. Participants described their experiences of self-management of their diabetes as emotionally, physically and socially challenging. Three main themes were revealed by data analysis, and such include: (1) self-monitoring of blood glucose; (2) access to resources and services as well as (3) social support. Women disclosed their diabetes more readily and integrated management into their daily lives, whereas men were more reluctant to tell friends and family about their diabetes and were less observant of self-management practices in social settings. Findings highlighted the differences in needs and challenges of diabetes self-management among men and women, which may inform gender-sensitive diabetes, care, counseling and support.

Biography

Khathutshelo Grace Netshisaulu has completed her Master's degree in Nursing in 2012 from the University of Venda and is now involved in data collection for her Doctoral degree from the University of Venda. She is a Lecturer at the same university. She has published 5 (five) articles in accredited journals and has 10 peer reviewed articles published in 2015.

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