

4th Annual Conference on **DIABETES**

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Integrated health care for diabetes management in underserved communities**Dana Lehman***Widener University, United States*

Diabetes is a chronic, autoimmune disease that affects the way the body metabolizes food and converts it into energy. There are several types of diabetes, all of which are all characterized by the body's inability to either produce insulin or use it effectively. Standard of care treatment for diabetes requires the use of a multidisciplinary team including an endocrinologist, primary care physician, podiatrist, dietician, certified diabetes educator (CDE), and mental health clinician. If left untreated, or treated ineffectively, long term complications of uncontrolled diabetes include blindness, kidney disease, neuropathy, limb amputation, heart disease and/or premature death.

AIDS Care Group serves approximately 1500 patients with complex medical and mental health needs. Our patients come from underserved communities of individuals who have traditionally struggled to access high quality medical and mental health care. Of our 1500 patients, a total of 527 patients (approximately 33.7% have been identified as either having diabetes or being prediabetic. Currently the American Diabetes Association recommends all patients receive a simple blood test known as an HbA1c every 3 months, to assess their overall glucose control, and a result of less than 7% is considered optimal. A preliminary review of the patients with diabetes that are served by AIDS Care Group indicate that the overwhelming majority of them struggle with poor glucose control, when assessed using this metric.

To address this issue, a multidisciplinary diabetes treatment team was developed. The goals of the team are to review all patient charts on a monthly basis, identify gaps in care, and work to help patients reduce their HbA1c and improve their quality of life. The following patient data is tracked in the hopes of demonstrating the effectiveness of this model:

- HbA1c Levels
- Microalbumin Levels
- Metabolic Panel Results
- Patient Weight

The goal of this presentation is to educate attendees about the structure and efficacy of our treatment model using data collected during the first 6 months of use at our clinic. In addition, barriers to efficacious diabetes treatment faced by underserved communities will be discussed, as well as the role of the mental health practitioner in working on a multidisciplinary diabetes treatment team.

Biography

As the Director of Mental Health Education Programming, Dr. Lehman is responsible for overseeing the training of all of the students at AIDS Care Group, as well as maintaining the agency status with the various accreditation boards. In addition to student training, she serves as the Director and Program Administrator of the Institute for Public Health Psychology, AIDS Care Group's continuing education for psychologists' program. She is a health psychologist by training and her clinical interest and work focuses on the integration of physical and mental health and she has and particularly enjoys treating people struggling with managing chronic health conditions, trauma, eating disorders, and compulsive sexual behavior. In addition to her work at ACG she maintains a private practice in Philadelphia and presents frequently at national conferences. She believes that a strong therapeutic relationship empowers people by giving them the support and skills necessary to help them reach their goals and live a life which they find meaningful and fulfilling.