

Title of Intervention: Internet-based intervention to support diabetes self-management and perceptions of social support

Intervention Strategies: Individual Education, Supportive Relationships

Purpose of the Intervention: To increase participants' perceptions of social support

Population: Adult internet-users with Type 2 diabetes

Setting: Home-based

Partners: Primary care medical practices

Intervention Description:

- Individual Education: Participants were given a computer and internet access to one of four groups: diabetes information only, a personal self-management coach, a social support intervention, or a combination of the personal self-management coach and social support. Each group had access to diabetes information. Participants in the personal coach condition could monitor their progress by entering information about their diet and blood glucose levels into a personal database.
- Supportive Relationships: In addition to the general diabetes information, the second group had access to a personal self-management coach. This coach guided participants by providing dietary advice and helping set dietary goals. A third group involved general diabetes information as well as a peer support component. These participants had access to activities that allowed them to exchange information and support with peers at a main activity area called the Diabetes Support Conference. The final group was a combination of information, the personal coach and the peer support components.

Theory: Not mentioned

Resources Required:

- Staff/Volunteers: Personal coaches
- Training: Not mentioned
- Technology: Websites, website developers
- Space: Computer station
- Budget: Not mentioned
- Intervention: Computers, internet access
- Evaluation: Scales of social support

Evaluation:

- Design: Randomized controlled trial
- Methods and Measures: Social support was evaluated in terms of perceived general social support and social support for diabetes.

Outcomes:

- Short Term Impact: Individuals in the social support interventions significantly increased their perceived availability of social support relative to participants who only had computer access to information about diabetes.
- Long Term Impact: Not measured

Maintenance: Not mentioned

Lessons Learned: Internet-based interventions may ultimately provide benefits beyond enhanced social support on such measures as depression, quality of life and health care behaviors that are relevant to diabetes management and the prevention of disease complications.

Citation(s):

Barrera M, Jr., Glasgow RE, McKay HG, Boles SM, Feil EG. Do Internet-based support interventions change perceptions of social support?: An experimental trial of approaches for supporting diabetes self-management. *Am J Community Psychol.* Oct 2002;30(5):637-654.