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ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF A HEALTHY DIET AMONG A SELECTED POPULATION OF DIABETIC PATIENTS ATTENDING THE DIABETIC CLINIC IN COLOMBO SOUTH TEACHING HOSPITAL

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Background: Diabetes is a chronic disorder which requires continuous medical care as well as patient and family education to prevent and minimize the complications. Dietary management plays a major role in management of diabetes.

Objectives: The aim of this study was to assess knowledge and practices regarding a healthy diet among a selected population of diabetic patients attending the diabetic clinic in Colombo South Teaching Hospital.

Method: This was a descriptive cross sectional study (n=146; age - 20-70 years). An interviewer administered pretested questionnaire was used for data collection on knowledge and practices of a healthy diet. There were 15 questions included to assess knowledge and based on the marks, patients were classified as having good knowledge (75-100), average knowledge (50 -75), and poor knowledge (< 50). Data analysis was done using SPSS 16.0 version and chi-square test was used to study the associations between characteristics of the study population.

Results and Discussion: In the population, 82% were females and 18% were males. Mean age was 57±9 years. Mean duration of diabetes was 9.1±6.8 years. Majority of the participants (n=129) had good knowledge regarding a healthy diet, 14 had average

knowledge and 3 had poor knowledge. Knowledge of a healthy diet was positively influenced by educational level of the participants (p<0.05). The dietary practices were good according to the results. However, most of the participants still had high fasting blood sugar levels (> 126 mg/dl) with diet control and medications. Poor family support was highlighted as the main barrier to maintain proper dietary management.

Conclusion: Thus, effective methods as well as repeated dissemination of knowledge and encouragement for the patients and family are needed to maintain proper healthy diet to achieve optimal glycemic control.

Ethical Clearance for the study was obtained from the Ethics Review Committee, Faculty of Medical Sciences, USJP and Colombo South Teaching Hospital.

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MOBILE HEALTH SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING IN NUTRITION PROJECTS

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Background: Introducing mobile technologies to record data improves the efficiency of work, accuracy of the data, analysis and enables viewing of real-time data. The objectives were, to effectively adopt and maximize the use of mobile applications for the data collection and to establish a simplified child monitoring process that saves time by optimizing data collection, registration, storage and sharing and linking households, community health workers, and health facilities with real-time health information