

# Abstract

## Focus on Patient-Centred Practice: Changes in Patient Activation Measure Scores and Health Outcomes in a Specialist-Primary Care Patient-Centred Diabetes Alliance Model

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A patient-centered approach is integral to the management of diabetes mellitus. The Hunter New England Diabetes Alliance is a specialist-led general practice-based patient-centered collaborative care model, established in 2017, Newcastle, NSW. It co-locates the patient, general practice team and tertiary-level diabetes specialist team in the same room in surroundings familiar to the patient. This model focuses on shared decision-making, education, evidenced-based practice for overall improved performance of the general practice. In this model, the Patient Activation Measure (PAM) questionnaire is used to measure, identify and target areas in which a patient lacks skill, knowledge or confidence in order to inform a management approach. A high PAM score indicates more engagement in healthcare. An increase in PAM score has been shown to improve health outcomes, with an overall increase of  $\geq 5$  points considered significant, although any increase is claimed to reduce overall healthcare costs. This is the first review of this measure in a collaborative primary care/specialist program. In this retrospective observational study 222 patients had initial and follow up PAM scores from two Alliance consultations at least six months apart with clinical parameters available for comparison. Mean age 65 years, 96% type 2 diabetes, mean duration 13 years (SD9.3), mean HbA1c 8.3% (SD1.6) and mean waist circumference 116cm (SD15.7). The mean reduction in HbA1c was 0.58% ( $p < 0.005$ , CI 0.36, 0.79). Mean PAM score increased by 3.91 points ( $p = 0.0001$ , 95%CI 1.98, 5.83). 60% increased their score by  $\geq 5$ . HbA1c and waist circumference reduced more in the group with PAM increase  $\geq 5$  points but this result was not statistically significant (0.6% vs 0.42% reduction HbA1c; 2.9cm vs 1cm decrease waist circumference). This study demonstrates the potential benefit of tailoring an approach based on areas identified in this simple tool, scope for increased use in different practice settings and also highlights complex nature and challenges of quantifying patient-centred practice.