The development of a structured education programme to improve cardiovascular risk in women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome; the SUCCESS study (NCT01462864)

Hamidreza Mani1,2, Heather Daly1, Janette Barnett1, Miles J Levy2, Kamlesh Khunti1, Trevor A Howlett2, Melanie J Davies1,2

1 - Diabetes Research Unit, College of Medicine, Biological Sciences and Psychology, University of Leicester
2 - Department of Diabetes and Endocrinology, Leicester Royal Infirmary, University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Background
• PCOS which is the most common endocrine problem in reproductive age women potentially increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and mental health issues. Lifestyle intervention is the first line of treatment for women with PCOS, however evidence for structured patient education in PCOS is lacking.
• There is evidence that structured education programmes improve illness perception, quality of life and the metabolic profile in other chronic conditions.
• We aimed to use an iterative cycle of research to develop a pragmatic educational intervention tailored for the needs of women with PCOS in line with the Medical Research Council's framework for developing and evaluating complex interventions (Craig 2008).

Methods

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Idea: development of a structured education programme for PCOS
• Literature Review
• Peers
• Patients’ interview
• Local data analysis
• Local and national experience in other chronic conditions

Developed idea: Establish a working group experienced in patient education
• Define theories and Philosophies
• Define the outcomes
• Define the target group
• Define the intervention
• Design the monitoring of the intervention

Intervention
• Draft the Education curriculum
• Patient resources
• Train the Educators

Patients’ interview
A semi-structured topic guide was used to assess their need and views on the education programme and its design and content

Results

This pilot work has resulted in a randomised Controlled trial to test its feasibility and efficacy; “Structured education programme to improve cardiovascular risk in women with polycystic ovary syndrome; SUCCESS study (NCT01462864)”

Conclusion
Women with PCOS are at increased risk of diabetes, cardiovascular and mental health issues and need an early lifestyle intervention. A successful outcome of our research programme will be a milestone in treatment of this condition and improving patient care especially in primary care.

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