

# HEAL-D Online – is it feasible to implement a virtual culturally tailored diabetes self-management programme for African and Caribbean communities in south London?

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## BACKGROUND

- Type 2 diabetes - major health concern for UK African and Caribbean people.
- HEAL-D co-designed as a culturally tailored diabetes 7-week self-management education programme tackling ethnic inequalities in diabetes healthcare access.
- HEAL-D Online developed in response to COVID-19 lockdown. Virtual roll-out in South London in 2021.

## AIMS

- To evaluate acceptability and feasibility of the HEAL-D Online programme.
- To explore potential patient benefit.

## CONCLUSION

- HEAL-D Online - well received by attendees with a high completion rate.
- Successful in providing attendees with the knowledge and necessary skills to elicit behavioural change, ultimately leading to weight loss in some attendees.

## METHODS

### Mixed methods service evaluation

**Quantitative:** Service activity data and post-attendance questionnaire assessed service user engagement, acceptability and benefit (self-reported weight loss and diabetes-related emotional distress). Data analysed using frequencies and percentages.

### Qualitative:

Semi-structured interviews: 14 service users and 7 service delivery staff exploring their perceptions of feasibility and acceptability. Data analysed using Framework Methodology.


Observations – All 7 sessions assessed for delivery fidelity using checklist. Three sessions were rated independently by two observers.

## RESULTS – Potential Patient Benefit


- Most service users reported weight loss. **78% (25/32)** had said that they had lost weight, **72% (23/32)** had noticed a reduction in their waist measurements.
- Improvement in diabetes-related emotional distress. Decrease in proportion of participants showing distress from pre-course (**27/55; 49%**) to post-course (**12/53; 23%**).
- Service users had **improved knowledge on diabetes management** (regularly monitoring weight and blood sugar levels, doing more exercise) and were **more confident in controlling their diet and managing their diabetes**.

## RESULTS - Acceptability

- Enrolment and uptake: 197 places available, 84 service users attended session 1 indicating service operating at **42% capacity**.
- Adherence: 65/84 service users completed HEAL-D Online ( $\geq 4/7$  sessions): **Completion rate of 77%**.
- Staff and service users interviewed **satisfied with all aspects of course delivery**.
- **Service users' willingness to recommend HEAL-D Online** to other family members and friends in the community. **Service delivery staff - positive about course, but highlighted problems in delivering the sessions online**, especially with the exercise component.

 *"I've enjoyed doing the sessions though I would say any challenges that I had, was more to do with being able to read the room and push patients more, that's more of a challenge online than it would be face to face." (Service delivery staff 2006)*

## RESULTS - Feasibility

- Service users – no major issues using the technology. Most (**83%; 44/53**) found the video calling facilities easy to use and instructions for Blue Jeans (platform used to deliver programme), easy to follow (**92%; 49/53**).
- Both service users and service delivery staff felt the COVID lockdown had made people more accustomed to on-line delivery of programmes.
  -  *"Because we've come out of lockdown, I've been used to doing lots of things virtually, because even with a support group, that's been virtual." Service user 1010*
- **Observations - HEAL-D Online delivered as intended.**
  - High mean fidelity score of 94% (118/126 items on checklist) – Four sessions had 100% fidelity. 100% Inter-rater reliability between the 2 independent observers on the 3 joint observations.

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