

## THE EFFECT OF AN ONLINE TYPE 2 DIABETES RISK COMMUNICATION INTERVENTION FOR PEOPLE IMPACTED BY ALCOHOL AND/OR OTHER DRUGS: A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED TRIAL

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**Introduction:** *Diabetes has been understudied in people with alcohol and/or other drug (AOD) problems. Despite the likelihood of these individuals being at greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (T2D), screening and education is not integrated into routine care. Research in risk communication has shown benefits in the general population, however little is known about its effectiveness in people with AOD problems.*

**Method:** *This study assessed the effectiveness of a T2D risk communication tool against an active control group among an online sample of people with AOD problems. Of the 1,282 online responses collected via recruitment from Reddit and Facebook, 459 eligible responses were randomized to either the intervention (T2D risk communication) or the control (COVID-19 health message) group.*

**Key Findings:** *While majority of the participants (i.e., 58.8%) were aged 35 and under, 43% of the participants were of high risk of T2D and the average diabetes risk score was in the intermediate category. A statistically significant interaction between time and intervention was found for T2D risk perception scores but not for physical activity and diet behavioural intention scores. Additionally, the proportion of participants who improved their T2D risk perception was significantly greater in the T2D intervention group as compared to the COVID-19 control group.*

**Discussions and Conclusions:** *Preliminary findings support the effectiveness of the brief online T2D risk communication tool in correcting T2D risk perception.*

**Implications for Practice or Policy:** *The brief online T2D risk communication tool can help to address the lack of T2D risk screening in the healthcare sector. Anyone entering rehabilitation, outpatient services, or in waiting rooms can be screened for T2D risk quickly and cost-efficiently, with minimum to no staff required. With increasing reliance on electronic communication over face-to-face consultations during this COVID-19 pandemic, having such an online tool available to aid medical professionals can be vital and beneficial in enhancing self-management among patients.*