

The HOPE Centre: A community-based non-communicable disease program in Zandspruit, South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

World Health Organization statistics indicate 38 million non-communicable disease (NCD) related deaths occur globally each year. Of those, 11.9 million deaths occur among 30-70 year old populations in low and middle income countries like South Africa. These premature deaths are largely preventable.¹



In an effort to address this growing public health challenge, Project HOPE South Africa's **HOPE Centre** was established in Zandspruit in 2012 as a comprehensive community-based program to address NCDs.

The community of Zandspruit is representative of a typical peri-urban community in South Africa in which approximately 9.27% of the population is estimated to be living with diabetes and the rate of hypertension among those over age 50 is estimated to be 78%, the highest rate for any country in the world, at any point in history.^{2,3}

AIM

The HOPE Centre aims to improve the total wellbeing of people at risk of developing or suffering from diabetes and hypertension.

OBJECTIVES

1 - Increase access to preventative services for diabetes and hypertension

2 - Increase access to treatment for diabetes and hypertension at the primary care level

3 - Improve self-management and quality of life for patients living with diabetes and/or hypertension

METHOD

Raising Awareness

A HOPE Centre team consisting of three employees and volunteer community health workers perform monthly campaigns during which we:

- Distribute educational materials/messages
- Screen community members
- Train Community Health Workers



As of August 2014, over 9,300 community members have been screened and received education on Diabetes & Hypertension and 78 community health workers have been trained by Project HOPE.

Improving Access to Healthcare Services

The HOPE Centre clinic operates three days per week (Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday), is staffed by two professional nurses and 8 support staff, and receives support from the City of Johannesburg through donated medications. The clinic provides much needed access to quality care for diabetes and hypertension alongside basic primary care. Key features that make our clinic different include:



- An appointment system that limits wait time
- Point of care laboratory testing for HbA1c, ACR, & Cholesterol
- Regular screenings for complications associated with diabetes including foot exams and retinopathy screenings
- On-site peer educators who provide one-on-one and group counselling

As of August 2014, 1,600 patients have been registered at the HOPE Centre Clinic.

Providing Patient Support

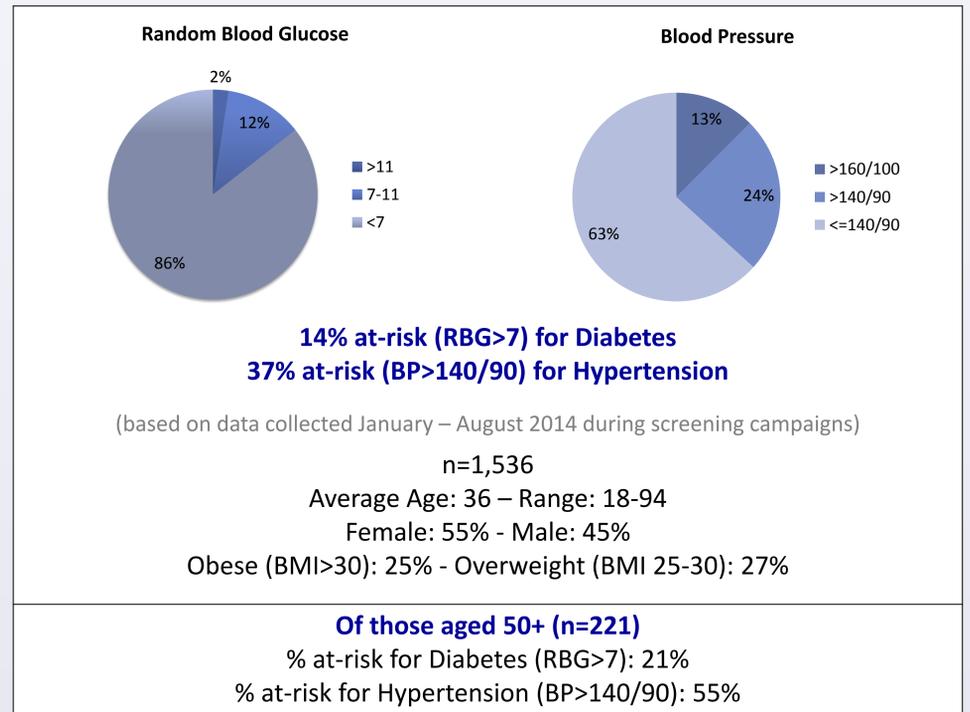
In an effort to meet the complete needs of our patients, 6 HOPE Centre team members provide a range of patient support programs to supplement care:

Facilitated self-care support groups, exercise classes, and cooking classes; organic gardens; savings groups; a nutrition program; and targeted home visits for patients who need one-on-one support



RESULTS

Prevalence Rates: The following rates of possible diabetes and/or hypertension have been identified in the Zandspruit community:



Clinical Outcomes: The following indicators measure how well diabetes and hypertension are controlled among HOPE Centre patients.

Well-Controlled Diabetes – (HbA1c <9%)

HOPE Centre Clinic: 65%
Comparison: 51%⁴

(based on 223 observations at the HOPE Centre Clinic between June 2013– June 2014 ; comparison to U.S.A. Medicaid population)

Well-Controlled Hypertension – (BP <140/90 on treatment)

HOPE Centre Clinic: 42%
Comparison: <10%³

(based on 2,839 observations at the HOPE Centre Clinic between June 2013– June 2014; comparison to like population in South Africa)

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The HOPE Centre brings much needed services to the community of Zandspruit. With limited time and attention available to patients with diabetes or hypertension in often over-burdened government clinics, NCD patients consider The HOPE Centre a haven where they receive quality care and have the opportunity to learn about their disease.

Through a focus on quality care as well as comprehensive patient support offerings and engagement with the local community, the HOPE Centre model helps patients live well with diabetes and hypertension and raises the level of general knowledge about NCDs in the surrounding community.

Project HOPE South Africa believes that the model we've developed in Zandspruit can be replicated in other communities to make an impact on the growing burden of NCDs across South Africa. Our evidence-based model rests upon performing large-scale screenings and education campaigns in the community to identify sick and undiagnosed patients. Once in treatment our model dictates that patients are considered whole individuals who need support to manage their diseases.

Through implementation of this model we lessen the burden of no or misinformation which leads to delays in receiving treatment and unnecessary complications which negatively impact quality of life.

REFERENCES

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