



Stronger community belonging associated with fewer hospitalizations among adults with diabetes

Gupta, Neeru "Stronger community belonging associated with fewer hospitalizations among adults with diabetes"
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What the researcher(s) did

Given the rising rates of diabetes, the researchers investigated the interconnections between diabetes management, social capital and hospital burdens in Canada. Linking data from population health surveys and healthcare administrative sources, they empirically analyzed the relationship between adults' sense of community belonging and diabetes-related preventable hospitalizations.

What the researchers found

Most (70%) Canadian adults aged 45 and over living with diabetes reported having a strong sense of belonging to their local community. Those who reported weak community ties were significantly more likely to have been hospitalized for complications of diabetes, even after controlling statistically for one's age and other characteristics.

RDC Datasets used

Canadian Community Health Survey 2007–2011
(linked to) **Discharge Abstract Database**
2005/06–2012/13

Policy areas this research can inform

- Health
- Society and community

Policy implications of this research

Diabetes is generally considered a condition for which hospital admissions can be largely prevented or delayed through community factors, which may include beneficial social connections fostering health-enhancing behaviours and leading to reduced health inequalities. Results from this research emphasized the need for health policy to shift the focus from considering not only biomedical risks but also social vulnerability to support patients with chronic conditions. Preventive measures could include community-based interventions facilitating positive social networks such as developing transportation networks, recreation programs and hobby groups, expanding access to digital communications, or cohousing communities for older adults.

Read the full article

Gupta, N. & Sheng, Z. (2021). Reduced risk of hospitalization with stronger community belonging among aging Canadians living with diabetes: findings from linked survey and administrative data. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9, 670082. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2021.670082.

