

Methodological Issues in a Dyadic Intervention for Women with Type 2 Diabetes

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Purpose: The dyadic intervention involves the pairing of women recently diagnosed with type 2 diabetes with women who have successfully managed the disease. Several factors can hinder the successful implementation of a dyadic intervention. The purpose is to describe the methodological issues related to the implementation of a dyadic intervention.

Method:

Methodological issues were taken into consideration during the design, and during the implementation of a study currently in progress. The issues discussed are based on a literature review, personal experiences, and observations.

Findings:

Methodological issues identified include: participant safety, recruitment, and support partner pairing. Careful screening and implementation of a structured training session for support partners can reduce the risk of emotional distress and personal harm to participants. Training sessions are designed to provide information on the responsibilities of a support partner, and the use of effective communication skills. The safety of the environment can be enhanced by conducting dyadic meetings in semi-private public locations approved by the investigator. Dyadic meetings can be monitored through the collection of weekly logs, and phone calls to participants. For recruitment, collaborations must be established with clinics/education programs, and civic organizations. Multiple methods may be used to recruit support partners and participants including: mail-outs, fliers, and provider referrals. The pairing of support partners with participants involves careful consideration of similar situational and character attributes. Specific variables such as diagnosis, age, gender, and race can be used to pair participants to support partners.

Discussion:

Despite advances in technology and medicine, diabetes is the 6th leading cause of death in the United States. Few people are able to achieve the level of glycemic control recommended by the American Diabetes Association. Therefore, behavioral interventions must be developed to facilitate the management of type 2 diabetes. The results of a dyadic intervention may provide preliminary information, which may be used to enhance diabetes care. Successful implementation of a dyadic intervention requires careful consideration of factors, that may impede participant safety, recruitment, and the pairing of support partner to participants.