IDF Europe COVID-19 Survey for People Living with Diabetes

Highlights of Results
IDF Europe Symposium, 17 November 2020
Living in COVID times
Restrictions on movement had a significant impact on the everyday life aspect of diabetes management.

Activity level during COVID
%  n=3,163

- More active: 14%
- Same level: 29%
- Less active: 57%

Weight variation during COVID
%  n=3,163

- Lost weight: 17%
- Stable weight: 52%
- Gained weight: 31%

More than half the respondents were less active and gained weight during the crisis.
Ability to manage one’s diabetes worsened on average during the period

Rating – Ability to manage diabetes during COVID
\%\, n=2,892, 2,906

![Bar chart showing the percentage of respondents rating their ability to manage diabetes before and during COVID.](chart)

- **Before COVID**
  - Very effectively: 34.6\%
  - Effectively: 39.8\%
  - Average: 21.9\%
  - Not very effectively: 3.2\%
  - Not effectively at all: 0.5\%

- **During COVID**
  - Very effectively: 28.5\%
  - Effectively: 32.1\%
  - Average: 27.8\%
  - Not very effectively: 9.3\%
  - Not effectively at all: 2.2\%
Higher variability and hypoglycaemic/hyperglycaemic events were reported during the crisis

Blood glucose readings variability during COVID
%
\(n=3,163\)

- More variable than usual 30%
- About the same 55%
- More stable than usual 15%

Episodes of hyper and hypoglycaemia during COVID
%
\(n=3,163\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Less than usual</th>
<th>More than usual</th>
<th>The same number</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypoglycaemia</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperglycaemia</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
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One third of respondents reported more variability in blood sugar levels and a quarter of respondents a higher number of hyperglycaemic events.
COVID-19 took its toll on the mental health of people living with diabetes

Level of anxiety during COVID

%, n=3,098

Episodes of low mood during COVID

%, n=3,098

Over 40% of respondents felt very or extremely anxious during COVID and more than half experienced low mood more often than usual.
Access to medication and supplies
Access to medication and supplies was quite markedly disrupted during COVID

Ease of access to medication
%, n=3,098

Ease of access to supplies
%, n=3,098

Less than half of respondents found it not at all difficult to get access to supplies and medication after COVID down from around 70% pre-COVID
In all countries, respondents reported greater difficulty in accessing medicines during COVID vs pre-COVID

Ease of access to medication pre vs during COVID

Percentage points difference “not at all difficult”
Countries with at least 50 answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage point difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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There were marked differences by country, reflecting a mix of country’s health system strength and pandemic severity.
Access to Health and Diabetes Care during COVID-19
There was little proactive care given by the “diabetes team” during COVID-19

Advice received, proactive approach by HCPs
n=2,841

Only half of those receiving advice were approached proactively by their healthcare team
Rapid and widespread alternatives to face-to-face consultations were put in place

Consultations during COVID
n=2,885

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Yes, face to face</th>
<th>Yes, virtually (tel., online)</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>920</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Virtual consultations: availability & preference pre COVID
n=2,764

- No, I preferred face-to-face consultations (remote consultations were available), 20.1%
- Yes, I attended a few, 8.0%
- Yes, I attended them regularly, 2.1%
- No, these were not available prior to COVID, 69.8%

The number of respondents attending a consultation was more than double that not attending.
Virtual consultations were rapidly made available in many European countries even those with no prior availability.
Virtual consultations proved useful during COVID 19, and potentially, popular forms of interaction in the future.

**Usefulness of virtual consultations**
- Helpful: 37%
- Average: 23%
- Not helpful: 9%
- Not helpful at all: 9%

**Willingness to attend virtual consultations in the future**
- Yes, as many of my consultations as possible, virtually: 25%
- Yes, but only as part of a mix of face-to-face and virtual consultations: 45%
- No, I would not want any virtual consultations: 30%

Few respondents did not find the virtual consultations useful, and a majority would be interested in some form of virtual consultations in the future.
The willingness to interact virtually in the future varied markedly by country

Willingness to have virtual consultations in the future
% Countries with more than 20 answers

There was strong opposition from France, Belgium and Luxembourg
The lack of targeted guidance was felt as an acute gap for PwD in their ability to deal with COVID-19

Help required during COVID-19
n=2,242

- More online virtual support: 27%
- More information and clearer recommendations for PwD: 67%
- Other: 6%

Guidance given for PwD during COVID
n=2,242

- To stay at home and not leave the house: 33%
- To physically distance: 32%
- To continue as normal: 5%
- No guidance given: 24%
- Other: 6%

Clarity of guidance
n=2,242

Mean: 2.3
Conclusions
Government responses to the pandemic did create havoc, but many healthcare systems rallied rapidly. Broad inequalities.

Confirmation of many of the observations made by healthcare professionals and other organisations
- Disruption in access to care (cancellation, rescheduled appointments), medication (esp. insulin) and supplies (esp. sensors)
- Deterioration in diabetes management
- Strong impact on mental health

Swift move to the use of virtual alternatives
- Proved useful
- Need refining (buy-in remains limited as does usefulness in some situations)

Huge disparities in challenges and responses across Europe
- Highlights the need for a much stronger Europe of Health capable of supporting a systemic transformation of health systems, stronger collaboration and best practices