

Landmark survey highlights needs of unpaid caregivers of people with diabetes

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The Hormone Foundation, the public education affiliate of The Endocrine Society, in collaboration with the National Alliance for Caregiving, today released key findings from a first-of-its-kind survey aimed at better understanding the daily needs and struggles of unpaid caregivers of people with diabetes.

The online [survey](#) completed by 1,002 respondents in April 2009 found that the major challenges in caring for those with [diabetes](#) include exercise and diet compliance, patient depression and maintaining target sugar levels. Caregivers reported that the physician is their top information source, followed by the Internet. However, while 73 percent of caregivers reported using the Internet to obtain diabetes information, many expressed frustration in evaluating the quality and reliability of online content.

Specific survey findings include:

- More than half of respondents (54 percent) struggle with diet-related issues like cooking, meal planning and non-compliance;
- Nearly half of respondents (49 percent) reported challenges with medical management of diabetes; and
- Twelve percent of respondents reported their own stress and emotional health as a significant concern.

"Caregivers are involved with a wide range of diabetes-related responsibilities and as a result, many report some social and personal health sacrifices due to their caregiving," said Gail Hunt, president and CEO of the National Alliance for Caregiving. "The more information we have to understand the issues and burdens caregivers experience, the better equipped we will be to provide them with meaningful assistance."

"This survey identified many important needs among caregivers of adults with diabetes, but this is only the first step," said Alvin M. Matsumoto, MD, chair of The Hormone Foundation Committee that spearheaded the survey initiative.

"To address the needs identified through the survey, the Foundation will be creating Diabetes Caregiver Central®, an easy-to-use Web site containing the most up-to-date information relevant to diabetes caregivers. The new Web site will serve as a comprehensive one-stop shop including resources and information about diabetes; diet and exercise; optimizing blood sugar control; managing complications and coexisting illnesses; and handling patient and caregiver stress and mental health," said Matsumoto.

Diabetes Caregiver Central is expected to go live in the fall of 2010.

Additional findings from the survey suggest that: 92 percent of respondents are often dealing with other conditions in addition to diabetes caregiving; women caregivers are more likely than men to have their mental and physical health affected by their caregiving role; and finally, women caregivers are more likely than men to seek information on diabetes caregiving.

More information:

http://www.hormone.org/Public/diabetes_caregiver.cfm

Source: The Endocrine Society ([news](#) : [web](#))

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