

Drive to reduce 999 diabetes calls in East Midlands starts

March 31 2016, by Cerri Evans



Over 400 potentially avoidable 999 calls related to a diabetes complication are made every month across the East Midlands, according to figures.

Now, a new study aimed at reducing emergency [ambulance](#) calls for hypoglycaemia – the condition where the [blood sugar](#) of the person with [diabetes](#) drops to dangerously low levels – is being launched across Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire to help reduce that number.

The project, called Ambulance Hypo, will target people who repeatedly make emergency calls because of hypoglycaemia. Once treated by paramedics they will be given an information booklet about the condition.

The patient will then either receive a call from a diabetes specialist nurse, who will discuss the causes and management of the complication, or be asked to contact their general practitioner for further help. Training workshops to educate ambulance staff about the project have begun.

The initiative comes as figures show paramedics attended 5,021 calls across the East Midlands between June 2013 and May 2014 to help treat the condition. Of those, 1,657 people were taken to hospital, while the remaining 3,364 were treated at home.

It is being led by the National Institute for Health Research's Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (NIHR CLAHRC) East Midlands with the East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Professor Niro Siriwardena, Associate Clinical Director of the East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust and Professor of Primary and Prehospital Health Care at the University of Lincoln's School of Health and Social Care, said: "Ambulance services are often the first point of contact for people with hypoglycaemia. Developing and evaluating better pathways to community care is of crucial importance for this and a number of other conditions, and this study is one of the first to do this for people with low blood sugar due to diabetes contacting [ambulance services](#)."

Professor Kamlesh Khunti, Director of CLAHRC East Midlands, said: "The aim of the Ambulance Hypo project is to lower the risk of people experiencing further hypoglycaemic attacks and the risks associated with them, as well as helping to improve patient well-being."

Hypoglycaemia is relatively common and can have significant health implications if not treated and can cause a coma or even death.

It can be controlled if the patient manages their diabetes correctly by checking their blood sugar levels regularly and eating the right foods.

The study will assess whether the enhanced care pathway for people with diabetes helps to reduce the recurrence of [hypoglycaemia](#), the patient's quality of life and their knowledge of DVLA driving regulations.

Provided by University of Lincoln

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