

The huge and growing primary care needs of people with diabetes who have survived COVID-19

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The huge and growing burden of treatment needed for survivors of COVID-19 with diabetes in primary care is the subject of a special

session on the infection at this year's Annual Meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD), given by Professor Kamlesh Khunti of the Diabetes Research Centre, University of Leicester, UK.

He will discuss how, among the risk factors for COVID-19 mortality, type 2 diabetes has emerged as an important and common risk factor for COVID-19 related hospital admissions and mortality. Studies have also shown that hyperglycaemia (abnormally high blood sugar) in people with type 2 diabetes is associated with worse outcomes.

"A public health crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic poses both direct and indirect risks to people with [chronic diseases](#) due to disruptions in care," explains Prof Khunti. "These include reductions in routine care, access to emergencies, poor adherence to treatments and [psychological impact](#). Globally, diabetes has also been shown to be the most disrupted chronic condition during the pandemic. The pandemic has led to reductions in face-to-face consultations and reductions in routine screening of [risk factors](#). This is likely to have increased the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 pandemic in socioeconomically deprived and ethnic minority populations."

He will say it is imperative that people with diabetes now get the routine care they need, including risk factor assessment and management and self-management education programmes including referral for psychological support where appropriate. "COVID-19 is also likely to have long term impact on people with diabetes and these patients need to be closely monitored in the short and medium term," he adds. "The risks of complications and mortality are high in people with diabetes admitted with COVID-19 following discharge and these patients will require a more intensive follow-up. Finally, it will be important to encourage COVID-19 vaccinations for all those with [diabetes](#)."

Provided by Diabetologia

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