



The SWEET Project – a model for Europe and beyond?

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'SWEET' is an acronym standing for 'Better control in paediatric and adolescent diabetes: working to create Centres of Reference' and is based on a partnership of established national and European diabetes organizations (www.sweet-project.eu): ISPAD (with paediatric centres from the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, UK to start with), IDF Europe, FEND, and PCDE. Co-funding was granted by the European Public Health Executive Agency with additional funds from corporate partners and foundations.

Outcomes of the project will be a better knowledge of paediatric diabetes in Europe, recommendations for minimum treatment and care standards, for patient education programmes and for paediatric training programmes for health professionals. Finally, a toolbox supporting the creation of Centres of Reference for paediatric and adolescent diabetes will be put in place. It will include a platform that allows any participating centre to import and input data online using a standard diabetes data set for paediatric diabetes patients. Those centres that do not currently have an electronic medical record system can enter their data directly into the database and manage patient information. Aggregate data is de-identified and exported to the SWEET project for longitudinal data analysis, training and ongoing delivery and improvements in the quality of patient care. In a first step the SWEET Online platform will allow 12 countries in 11 languages to connect to one unified diabetes database.

The goal is to develop joint recommendations for structure, process and outcome quality with regard to the treatment strategies and standards for paediatric diabetology, as well as training programs for diabetes experts and patients. The SWEET project hopes to extend from the initial group of centres within countries and throughout Europe and beyond with the help of the ISPAD network.

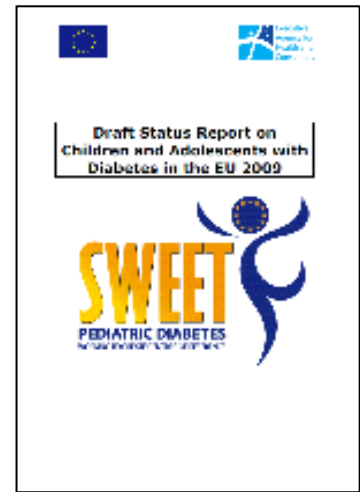
SWEET Dreams:

Structure, Process and Outcome Quality in Europe Heterogeneity of pediatric diabetes care in Europe

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Introduction/objectives:

Diabetes is one of the most frequent chronic diseases affecting children and adolescents. The main objective of SWEET Project is to improve control of diabetes all types in children by supporting the development of centers of reference for pediatric diabetes in the EU. Here we present results of work package 1 of this project aiming to describe current situation on pediatric diabetes care in EU.

Methods:

Data were collected using two questionnaires. The first one distributed among leading centers of pediatric diabetes (one per country) was aimed to establish an overview of systems, national policies, quality control and financing of pediatric diabetes care. Responses were received from 26/27 EU countries. The second questionnaire was widely disseminated among 354 ISPAD members from EU countries and included questions related to individual pediatric diabetes centers. A total of 108 datasets were collected and processed from health care professionals caring for more than 29 000 children and adolescents with diabetes.

Results:

There is considerable heterogeneity in the delivery of care for children with diabetes across Europe. Only 13/26 EU countries have a pediatric diabetes register. Seventeen countries have officially recognized centers for pediatric diabetes, but only eight of them have defined criteria for becoming such a center. A system of quality control of pediatric diabetes at the national level was reported from 7/26 countries. Twelve countries have reported national diabetes plans. Moreover, in only four countries deals this plan specifically with children. Two countries are addressing children at risk of type 2 diabetes by focusing on childhood obesity.

Conclusions: The dataset forms an important basis enabling the development of strategies towards better and more equal access to modern pediatric diabetes care across Europe.

How sweet is SWEET?

– better control in pediatric and adolescent diabetes: working to create centres of references

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The increasing incidence of T1DM in children and decreasing age at onset, has been reported almost everywhere in Europe. The disease itself and its late (micro- and macrovascular) complications may cause major burden both personally and financially as well as for society. With optimal care from diagnosis and onwards, the long term complications may be prevented or delayed.

Identification of current standards of treatment and care of children with diabetes in the EU, and the recommendations for better control in paediatric and adolescents diabetes is one of the objectives of the SWEET project.

Through a mail questionnaire, information was obtained on practice guidelines, structure of diabetes teams and their services. In most countries the ISPAD Clinical Practice Consensus Guidelines 2006–2008 was used as basis for the national recommendations of diabetes care and treatment.

Although treatment goals may be comparable, and care through multidisciplinary teams is supported, for none of the team members, EU wide recognised professional training exists. Recognized team members, their roles, their availability and the services provided, differ significantly between the countries.

The aim of the SWEET study is to address these differences as well as create recommendations of Diabetes Care and Treatment to enhance equal standards of treatment and care of children with diabetes within Europe.

This is SWEET!