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Integrated program improves heart, stroke risk factors in diabetics

March 27, 2018 | News

Kaiser Permanente's Preventing Heart Attacks and Stroke Everyday (PHASE program) consistently outperforms nation.



Singapore - Over a 10-year period, control of three key cardiovascular risk factors improved faster for Kaiser Permanente diabetes patients in Northern California than in the rest of the United States, according to research published in the American Journal of Medicine.

This study marks the first investigation to systematically assess the effects of Preventing Heart Attacks and Strokes Everyday (or PHASE) program, launched in Northern California in 2004, on multiple risk factors. The study reviewed annual blood pressure, blood sugar and blood lipid levels in approximately 100,000 PHASE patients with diabetes in Northern California, and compared them with data on commercial enrollees from the National Committee for Quality Assurance's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (or HEDIS).

"People with diabetes face a higher risk of stroke and heart attack, but controlling key risk factors is a real challenge," said lead author Jamal S. Rana, MD, PhD, cardiologist at Kaiser Permanente Oakland Medical Center and adjunct researcher at the Division of Research. Bringing blood pressure, blood sugar and blood lipid levels under control is a major focus of the PHASE program at Kaiser Permanente, which uses lifestyle changes and medications to improve patients' heart health.

The PHASE program was designed for members with an elevated risk of cardiovascular disease, including people who have had a heart attack, stroke or diabetes. The use of a patient registry identifies these patients who might benefit from intensive risk-factor control, and each patient is treated by a comprehensive care management team according to a continually updated treatment algorithm.