

Functioning of families with children suffering from type 1 diabetes mellitus

Kobos E.^{1,2}, Szewczyk A.^{2,3}, Knoff B.¹, Sienkiewicz Z.¹, Kryczka T. (MD)¹

¹Faculty of Health Sciences, Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

²Polish Federation for Diabetes Education, Warsaw, Poland

³Children's Memorial Health Institute, Warsaw, Poland

Background: In order to induce effective actions it is important to understand the nature and development of problems occurring in families with diabetes type 1 children.

Aim: The aim of the research was to analyze the functioning of families with diabetes type 1 children basing on the assessment of different family functions.

Method: The research material was collected using a complimentary questionnaire. The research was conducted in 4 randomly chosen therapy centres for diabetic children in Poland. 50 families were chosen from each therapy centre. Research material was gathered during parent and child's visits in specialist clinic. The statistical analysis of data included the influence of the child's illness on the intensity of realization of eight family functions, the analysis of the differentiating factors on the child's side as well as the family's and guardian's side which have an influence on the realization of family functions.

Result: Type 1 diabetes in child affects an increase of completion of a control and socialization (42,5%), emotional-expressive (35,5%) and care and nursing function (40,4%), and affects a decrease of completion of a cultural and social (16%), and procreative (13,5%) function of the family. The noticeable influence of the child's illness on the realization of family functions depends on: length of the illness, child's age, frequency of hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia, frequency of glycemia measurements, family's material status, parents' education level, mother's professional status, number of children in the family.

Conclusion: The research allowed to identify the most important factors on the side of the ill child, which can cause an indirect threat to family functioning: shorter time on illness, younger child, more often hypoglycemia and hyperglycemia states, higher number of glucose measurements at night. The factors on the side of the family, which have a protective role in the realization of family functions with diabetes type 1 are: good education of parents, having a job, a larger place of living.