



Diabetes Prevention Project Underway (DPP I)

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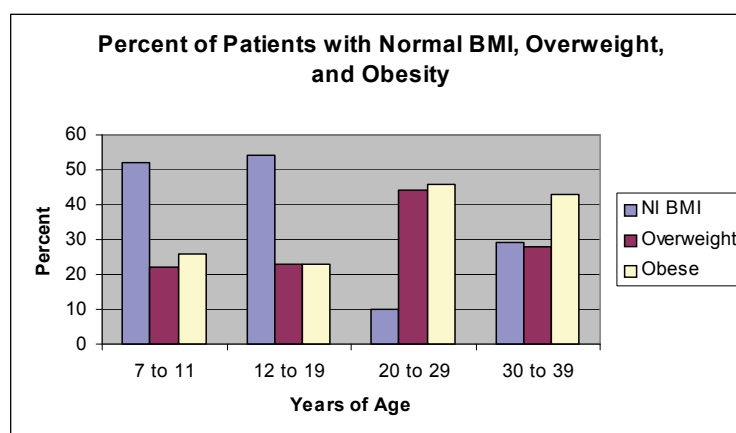
The growing epidemic of diabetes among young people is RIOS Net's top priority. In response to this problem, a group of network members together with staff has been working on projects aimed at reducing the impact of this epidemic in our communities. The first phase is our Diabetes Prevention Project, Phase 1, and it is well underway. To recap, the first phase is intended to describe how extensive the problem is among young people we see in our practices. Members are gathering data on the prevalence of overweight, obesity, type 2 diabetes, acanthosis nigricans (AN – a possible precursor of diabetes), hypertension and dyslipidemia among persons 7-39 years old in our members' practices. Participating clinicians complete a short health survey on all patients between 7-39 years of age who are seen during a two-week period. Some participating clinicians were given personal digital assistants (PDAs) for data collection. We currently have 19 clinicians who have entered a total of 279 patients' health history with the use of these PDAs. Following are some preliminary results from the first 200 patients.

Characteristics of these 200 patients enrolled in DPP I are shown in Table 1. There are almost twice as many females as compared to males. Slightly over half of the participants are Hispanic.

Table 1- Characteristics of first 200 patients enrolled in DPP I via PDA

Characteristics	% of Sample (n=200)
Age (Years)	
7-11	12%
12-19	28%
20-29	24%
30-39	36%
Gender	
Female	65%
Male	35%
Ethnicity	
Hispanic	56%
White, non-Hispanic	31%
Other	13%

When looking at BMI by age groups, twice as many adults are obese compared to children and adolescents. For this evaluation, overweight in children is defined as having a BMI from 85%-94% and obese as 95% and above. For adults, overweight is defined as having a BMI of 25 to 29 and obese as having a BMI of 30 and above. According to the 1999-2000 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), the prevalence of 12-19 year olds with a BMI $\geq 95\%$ was 15.5% and 15.4% among 6-11 year olds.



Our data currently found that the prevalence of 12-19 year olds with a BMI $\geq 95\%$ is 23% and 26% among 7-11 year olds. NHANES reports that the combined prevalence of overweight and obesity in adults is about 55%. Our data found that the prevalence of overweight and obesity in our adult patients is about 79%.

Only 2% of the patients are known to have diabetes; 7% have hypertension, 7% have dyslipidemia, and 16% have AN. When looking at AN by age group, AN is fairly equally distributed (from 12 to 21 %) between the four age groups. Variables examined in relation to prevalence of AN are reported in Table 2. Two variables found to be associated with AN are ethnicity/race and family history of diabetes. Patients who are Hispanic have a higher prevalence of AN (26%) compared to nonhispanic white (0%) and other race (12%). Patients with a family history of diabetes had approximately four times the prevalence of AN (23%) as compared to those without a family history of diabetes (6%). Children/teens with AN tend to have higher BMIs (mean BMI % = 97%) than those children/teens without AN (mean BMI% = 65%; p<0.0001). In addition, adults with AN also tend to have higher BMIs (mean BMI = 34) than those without AN (mean BMI = 29; p<0.0013).

These results are early, and many more clinicians will be submitting information about the patients they are seeing. However, if these early findings continue, it is clear that the problem of obesity and diabetes in our patients is indeed becoming an epidemic or frightening potential

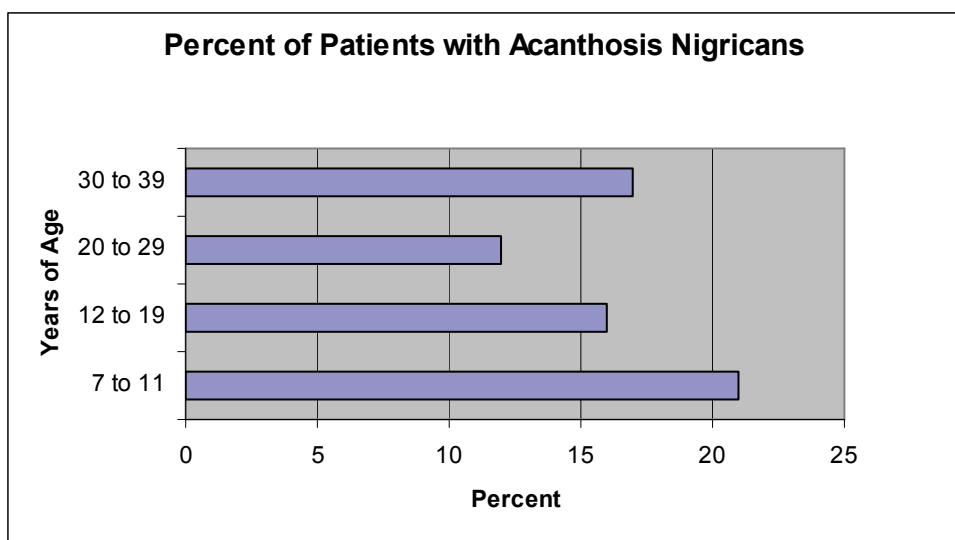


Table 2- Associations of demographic and health history variables in relation to having Acanthosis Nigricans.

Variable	n ^a	% ^b	p-Value ^c
Ethnicity			
Hispanic	113	25.7	<0.0001
White, nonhispanic	61	0	
Other	26	11.5	
Gender			
Female	131	17.6	0.54
Male	69	13.0	
Family Hx of DM			
Yes	120	23.3	0.002
No	71	5.6	
Don't Know	9	0	
Family Hx of MI before 56yoa			
Yes	51	15.7	0.63
No	141	17.0	
Don't Know	8	0	
Family Hx of Strokes before 56yoa			
Yes	30	26.7	0.12
No	159	15.1	
Don't Know	11	0	

Abbreviations: Hx= history, DM=diabetes, MI=myocardial infarction

^a Total number of patients in each stratum

^b Percent of patients in each stratum with Acanthosis Nigricans

RIOS Net, July 2003

Robert Williams, MD, MPH

RIOS Net is an actively growing, energetic group of primary care clinicians from around the state of New Mexico who are committed to bettering the health of the people and communities they serve. As of early June, RIOS Net has 164 members, 20% of whom are in Indian Health sites, 37% of whom are in community health centers, 43% of whom are in UNM primary care sites. A total of 15 general internists, 30 general pediatricians, 14 nurse practitioners and 11 physician assistants belong to the network, while 86 family physicians are members. We welcome you to learn more about the network membership and current projects, including a list and map of members, on the members-only page of the RIOS Net website at <http://hsc.unm.edu/rios>. (If you are a member of the network and do not have your password to the members-only page, please let us know at riosnet@salud.unm.edu.)

The network continues to focus on the priorities chosen by its membership and community representatives: diabetes/obesity in young persons; health effects of tobacco product use; health effects of problem alcohol use; cancer prevention; family violence; hepatitis C; depression; chronic pain; working effectively with complementary/alternative and traditional providers. Projects are underway or being planned in 7 of these 9 priority areas.

Members of RIOS Net are eligible for appointment as adjunct faculty at UNM (with access to additional medical library resources, UNM's Johnson Gym, and reduced UNM entertainment prices). If you would like further information about this option, please contact the network staff. Members who participate in certain network projects are also eligible to receive

personal digital assistants as part of that participation.

The network's Board of Directors, made up primarily of members, meets quarterly to set network policies, with its next meeting scheduled for August 28. The RIOS Net Community Advisory Board is meeting every 4 months, with its next meeting scheduled for September 19.

The network is supported by the University of New Mexico Health Science Center, and its departments of Family and Community Medicine, Pediatrics and Internal Medicine, and by the Albuquerque Area of the Indian Health Service. Support has also been received from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, and the American Diabetes Association.

Tobacco Usage Among Primary Care Patients

Nicole Kellett

RIOS Net members identified the apparent rising use of tobacco in New Mexico as one of their major concerns. As a result, the RIOS Net Board has decided to conduct a project study to assess the rates, duration, and types of tobacco use in patients as well as their views regarding cessation. This tobacco product use prevalence project is vital in developing subsequent cessation and prevention programs to assure that current and prospective services respond to the needs and desires of the communities they serve.

The project consists of a brief survey which can be conducted on a personal digital assistant, or on paper form. Clinicians are asked to conduct the survey on all patients age 12 and above who agree to participate for a period of two weeks. Clinicians who have helped test the survey form report that it has led to useful discussions about tobacco cessation, and in a few cases, even led to identifying previously unrecognized tobacco use. If you are interested in participating in this important research, please contact the project coordinator, Nicole Kellett, at 505-272-8357 or nkellett@salud.unm.edu.

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Alcohol Study Group

Chuck North, MD, MS

Whenever we discuss the health problems of New Mexico, alcohol abuse disorders are the 800 pound gorilla in the room. Our Community Advisory Board feels strongly that RIOS-Net should start studying the role of primary care physicians in alcohol abuse prevention, early detection and treatment. After 25 years of practice experience, I feel more hopeful than ever that we have validated screening methods, prevention tools and treatments available. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) announced two requests for grant applications pertinent to our research network that we may be able to use for funding a project. The first is entitled "Alcohol Treatment, Services, and Prevention Studies of High Priority to Providers and the second is "Implementation of Screening and Brief Interventions for Alcohol-Related Problems."

A study group composed of Rob Williams, Mark Unverzagt, Bob Leverence, Bronwyn Wilson, Catherine Baca and me has met regularly to discuss a network project that would improve the care of our patients and populations. Some of the possibilities include:

1. Develop training for interested clinicians in tools for alcohol screening and counseling and evaluate whether these methods prove useful to the clinician.
2. Develop a computer-based, patient-operated approach to screening for problem alcohol use.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of different approaches to rapid alcohol screening and intervention to measure its value in clinical practice for our members

We are concerned that competing demands in busy practices and lack of comfort dealing with alcohol abuse may contribute to difficulty dealing with alcohol disorders. Currently the study group is evaluating the literature on brief intervention and motivational interviewing. We are also consulting with subject matter experts locally. We invite anyone interested in this topic to join us. Please contact Shirley Alexander if you would like to join in the discussion and planning.

The PRINS project is RIOS Net's introductory project for all new members that helps to define our network as a whole as well as the patients RIOS Net members serve. Last year, the PRINS was introduced to the network as a separate project funded by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). After completing the initial data collection period for AHRQ, RIOS Net's Board of Directors decided to make the project a long-standing one for membership eligibility. Not only will the PRINS project offer a satellite view of our network, but also for individual clinicians in the network it allows for an opportunity to take a quantitative look at one's own patient panel and how it relates to others in NM as a whole, and to the nation.

For those clinicians who completed the PRINS project by October 2002, we expect the web-based data analysis will be available on our web site in August/September. Our Family and Community Medicine data analyst Betty Skipper, PhD, and PRINS Principal Investigator Mark Unverzagt, MD have been diligently working on the numbers. **Keep your eyes open!**

Melissa Smith
Primary Care Network Survey (PRINS) Update

RIOS Net Explores How Clinicians Balance Competing Demands in Clinical Encounter

Andrew Sussman, PhD, MCRP

RIOS Net has made diabetes a central focus of our network research. We are currently conducting two projects to explore various dimensions of this public health epidemic. In the Diabetes Prevention Project: Phase I (DPP I), clinicians are collecting patient data pertaining to the prevalence of several risk factors for type 2 diabetes. The focus of the second phase of our diabetes research (DPP II) examines the delivery of preventive counseling in the patient encounter. Primary care settings represent an important opportunity to provide diabetes prevention counseling to adolescents and young adults at high risk for diabetes. However, clinicians face difficult challenges as they seek to balance the priorities and competing demands of each time-limited patient encounter. To date, little is understood regarding how clini-

icians make such decisions. The purpose of this project is to better understand how clinicians do their work in counseling to prevent diabetes what works, what doesn't.

Learning how and when clinicians manage to fit in preventive counseling in the brief encounter is also a goal of the project

RIOSNet clinicians are in an ideal position to share this important knowledge. We believe that the findings from this study will yield important insight into not only the interpersonal dynamics that structure clinician-patient encounters, but also help to develop evidence-based strategies to assist and guide clinicians in preventive counseling for diabetes



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RIOS NET COMPLETING SECOND PROJECT

Robert Williams, MD, MPH

One of the first projects that RIOS Net undertook was an important study based entirely on listening to our patients. This project had several goals: 1) to learn how views about privacy of health information varies in communities around the state; 2) to learn whether the new federal regulations about privacy of health information would be sufficient to protect privacy considering cultural and regional views on this topic; 3) to learn what steps RIOS Net should take in its projects to assure that we are following practices consistent with local views. This project is a critical first step in planning future work in the network.

Eighteen focus groups have been conducted around the state over the last 8 months, listening to people's views on these subjects. Groups have met in rural and urban communities, in native Hispanic, immigrant Hispanic, Navajo, and Pueblo communities, and among clinicians and health care staff*. The project staff has just begun to synthesize all the information we received in these groups, and it is too early to provide any summary conclusions. Over the next several months, the staff will be reviewing preliminary conclusions with community representatives. By the end of the year, a full report on what people in our communities think about the privacy of their health information will be posted on our website.

*Communities where groups were held: Hatch, Albuquerque S. Valley, Albuquerque Pueblo Center, Shiprock, Standing Rock, Whitehorse Lake, Gallup, Laguna, Pojoaque, Española, Albuquerque IHS and Santa Fe.

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