

Pre-Medical Course Group Clinical Trial Project

Patients who suffer from diabetes mellitus need to ensure that their intake of sugars and insulin, and their energy expenditures are in an appropriate balance. When the patient is a child or adolescent, ensuring that this balance is achieved is a task shared by the whole family. There is also a need for education on the way to control the disease, both to avoid acute complications, and to avoid longer term problems, such as diabetic kidney disease or diabetic eye disease.

In a clinic for children and adolescents with diabetes, education is usually given by the doctors and nurses in the clinic in the usual course of the treatment and monitoring of the patient. However, it was felt that a series of informal education sessions (short lectures, discussion groups, question and answer sessions etc.), attended by groups of patients and/or their parents, would be more effective.

Design a trial to assess which method of providing information is more effective. Pay particular attention to issues of measurement, allocation and ethics. A book which may contain relevant information is *Childhood & Adolescent Diabetes*, edited by Simon Court & Bill Lamb. 1997, Wiley, although you should make full use of the Medical Library in order to assimilate the information about Diabetes you *require* for this project.