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URA SUWANNARUK : APPLICATION OF EMPOWERMENT IN SELF CARE OF THE DIABETIC PATIENTS AT SATHINPRA HOSPITAL, SONGKHLA PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISOR : SOMCHAI TOONKOOL M.S.N. , CHARUVAN HEMATORN M.P.H., SUMALEE SINGHANIYOM M. Sc. , NOPPADON TAMEYAPRADIT M.D. 162 P. ISBN 740- 662-064-9

Diabetes mellitus is a chronic disease. Treatment involves extensive changes in the patient's behavior such as controlling diet, taking oral pills, taking care of personal hygiene and paying regular visits to a doctor. Although previously there have been several experimental studies in various programs, the purpose of this quasi-experimental research study was to study the application of empowerment in self care of diabetic patients. The study sample were non-insulin dependent diabetic patients who attended the diabetes mellitus clinic at Sathinpra hospital, Songkhla province, during January 1996 to June 1996. They were matched by sex, age and level of fasting blood sugar. Each pair was randomized into an experimental group and a comparison group of 30 patients each. The experimental group members received training about empowerment for self care through 1 hour individual counseling followed, at one month intervals, by 2 hour group counseling sessions. The comparison group received 3 sessions of a regular health education program at one month intervals. Research instruments consisted of questionnaires for data collection, the empowerment program and health records for diabetic patients. Data were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation,  $\chi^2$ -test, t- test and paired t-test which were applied at the alpha of 99 percent.

The result of this study indicated that after the experimental, the experimental group had significantly more knowledge, self- efficacy, practice and fasting blood sugar control than before participating in the program and than the comparison group ( $P < 0.01$ ).

It is recommended that an empowerment program technique should be used to develop behavioral changes and self-efficacy in diabetic patients. Such a program could give diabetics better control of their blood sugar levels. It may be possible to apply this program with other chronic disease patients.