

# Exploring Healthcare Providers Attitudes, Knowledge and Values of Self-Management Programmes for Type 2 Diabetes in the Mid-West Region.

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## INTRODUCTION

- i. Type 2 Diabetes (T2DM) is a serious but treatable health condition and represents over 90% of all cases of diabetes (Holman *et al.* 2015).
- ii. According to national & international bodies, structured patient education (SPE) is an evidence based, core component in the care pathway for people living with T2DM.
- iii. The HSE Mid-West region provides two free SPE programmes to people with T2DM, DESMOND and Discover Diabetes Type 2.
- iv. Despite the significant clinical and personal benefits, recruiting participants has been challenging in the Mid-West region.
- v. The role of healthcare providers (HCP's) in service user decisions to attend SPE has been highlighted, with inadequate information provision, a lack of enthusiasm and poor promotion of available programmes by HCPs cited as factors influencing attendance (Ross *et al* 2019).
- vi. The aim of this research was to explore HCP's attitudes, knowledge and values of self-management programmes for T2DM in the Mid-West region.

## METHODS

- i. A cross sectional online survey was developed using a Likert scale design to examine the knowledge, values and attitudes of HCPs towards SPE.
- ii. A pilot study was run in the UL Health Sciences Academy and the survey was revised in response to this feedback.
- iii. This survey was distributed to HCP's in the Mid-West region via HSE email, professional networks and Twitter.
- iv. The survey gathered information on the demographics of participants and explored their attitudes and values to 24 diabetes related statements on topics such as special training requirements, multidisciplinary team working, SPE and the treatment of diabetes.
- v. Data was analysed using SPSS with a significance of  $p < 0.05$  to identify significant findings.

## RESULTS

### Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1. shows that n= 66 participants completed the survey. Health and Social Care professionals comprised the largest part of the cohort. Respondents mainly worked in primary care (53%)

Parameter	n (%)
<b>Profession</b>	
GP	6 (9.1)
Clinical Specialist Post	9 (13.6)
Practice Nurse	4 (6.1)
Public Health Nurse	6 (9.1)
Health & Social Care Professional	25 (37.9)
Pharmacist	3 (4.5)
Other healthcare professionals (Dentist, General Nurse, CNM, Administration, Community Development Officer, Quality & Patient Safety officer)	13 (19.7)
<b>Work Setting</b>	
Primary Care	35 (53.0)
Secondary Care	25 (37.9)
Other	6 (9.1)

### Attitudes

- Respondents had an overall positive attitude toward diabetes care and SPE.
- Notably, all HCP's valued an interdisciplinary approach to the treatment and care of T2DM and 97% agreed that training to improve communication skills was important.
- Almost a third of respondents (n=19; 28.7%) found it frustrating to treat T2DM.
- 30.3% found it difficult to persuade people with T2DM to include SPE in their treatment plan.
- Of those HCP's who were aware they could refer, over half take time to explain to their clients what diabetes structured education is (n= 25; 55.5%)
- Over half (n =23; 51.1%) of respondents always inform patients with diabetes about SPE.

### Knowledge

Figure 1. Overall awareness of ability to refer to SPE

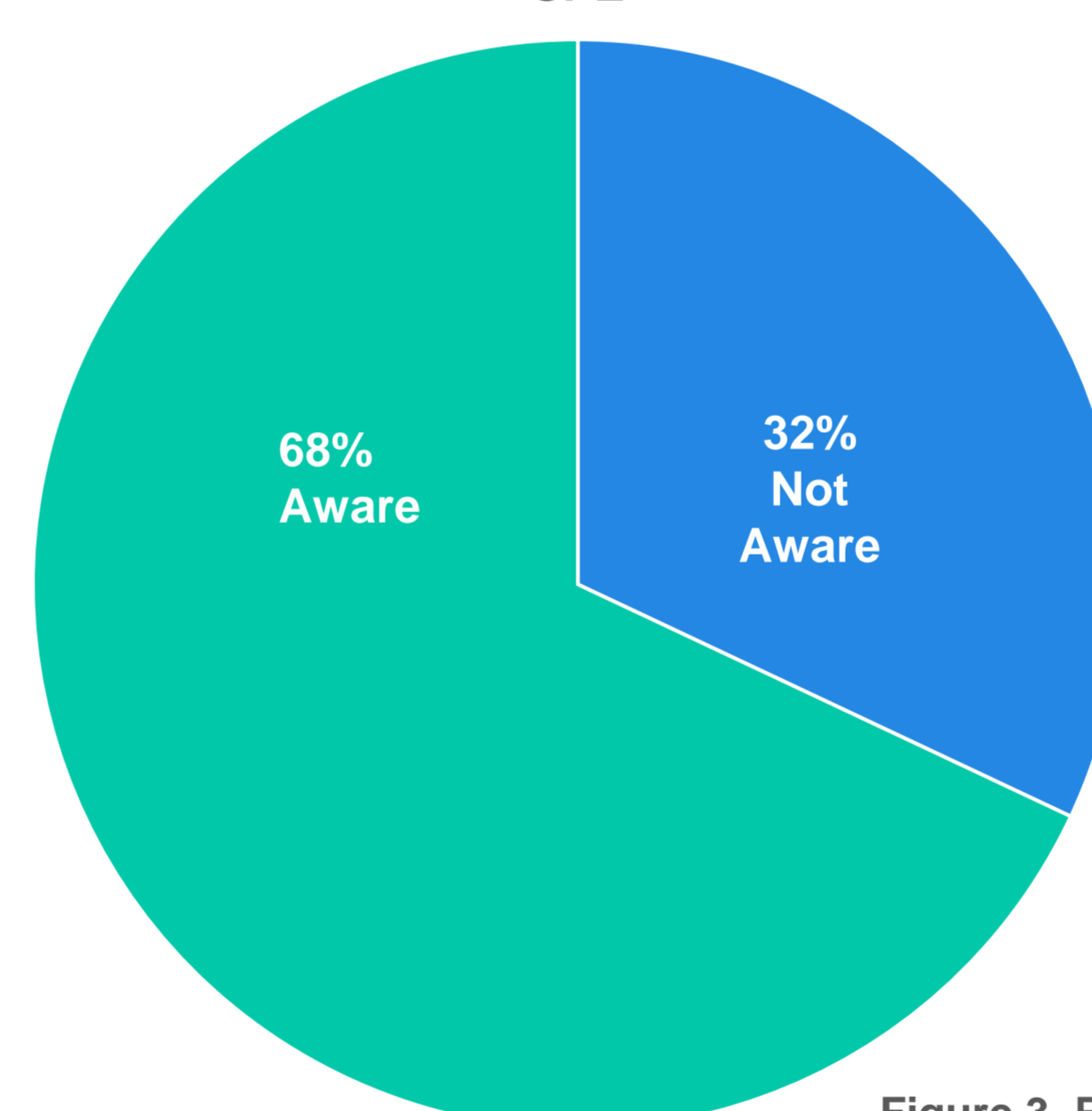


Figure 2. Health & Social Care Professionals awareness that they could refer

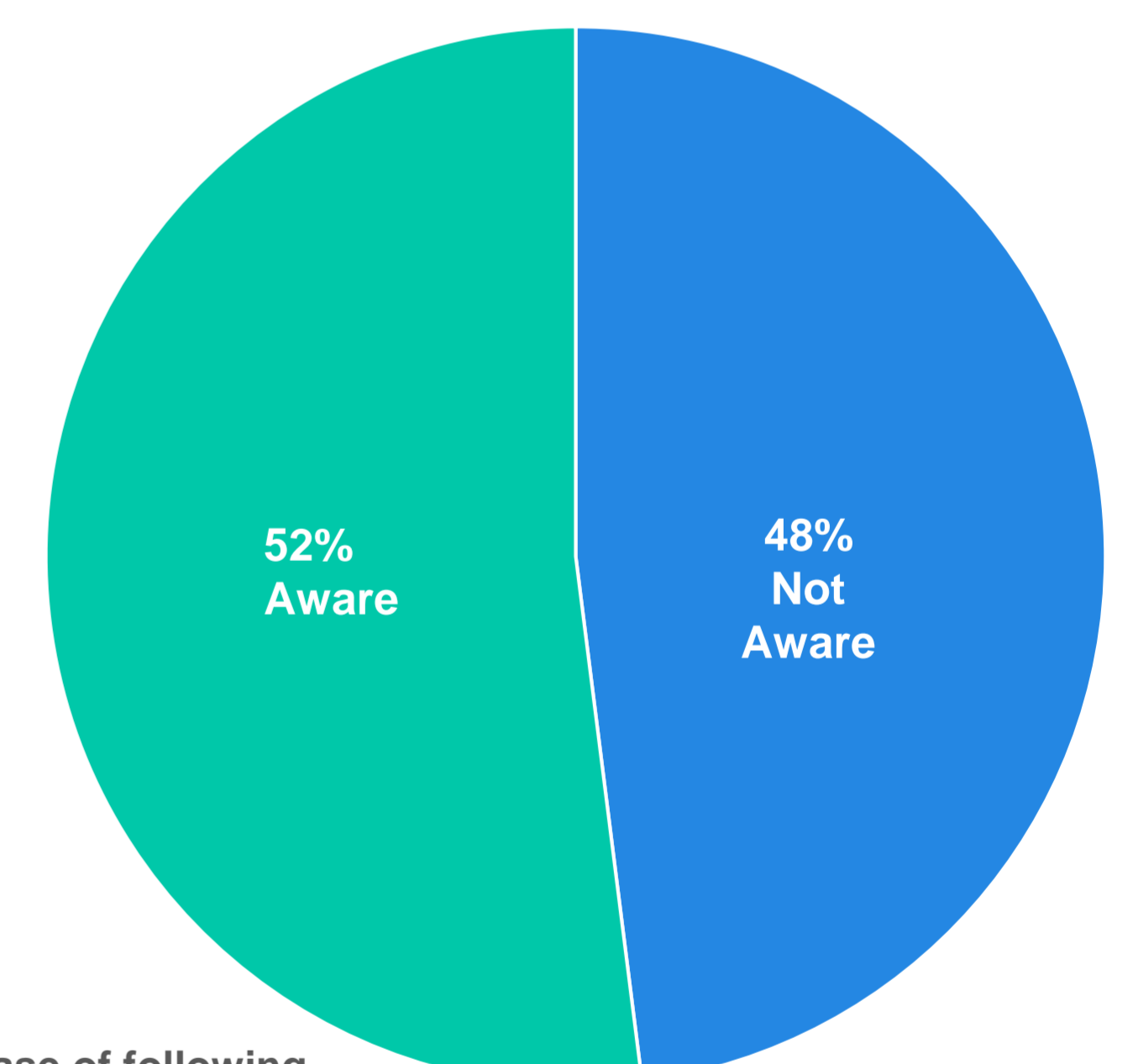
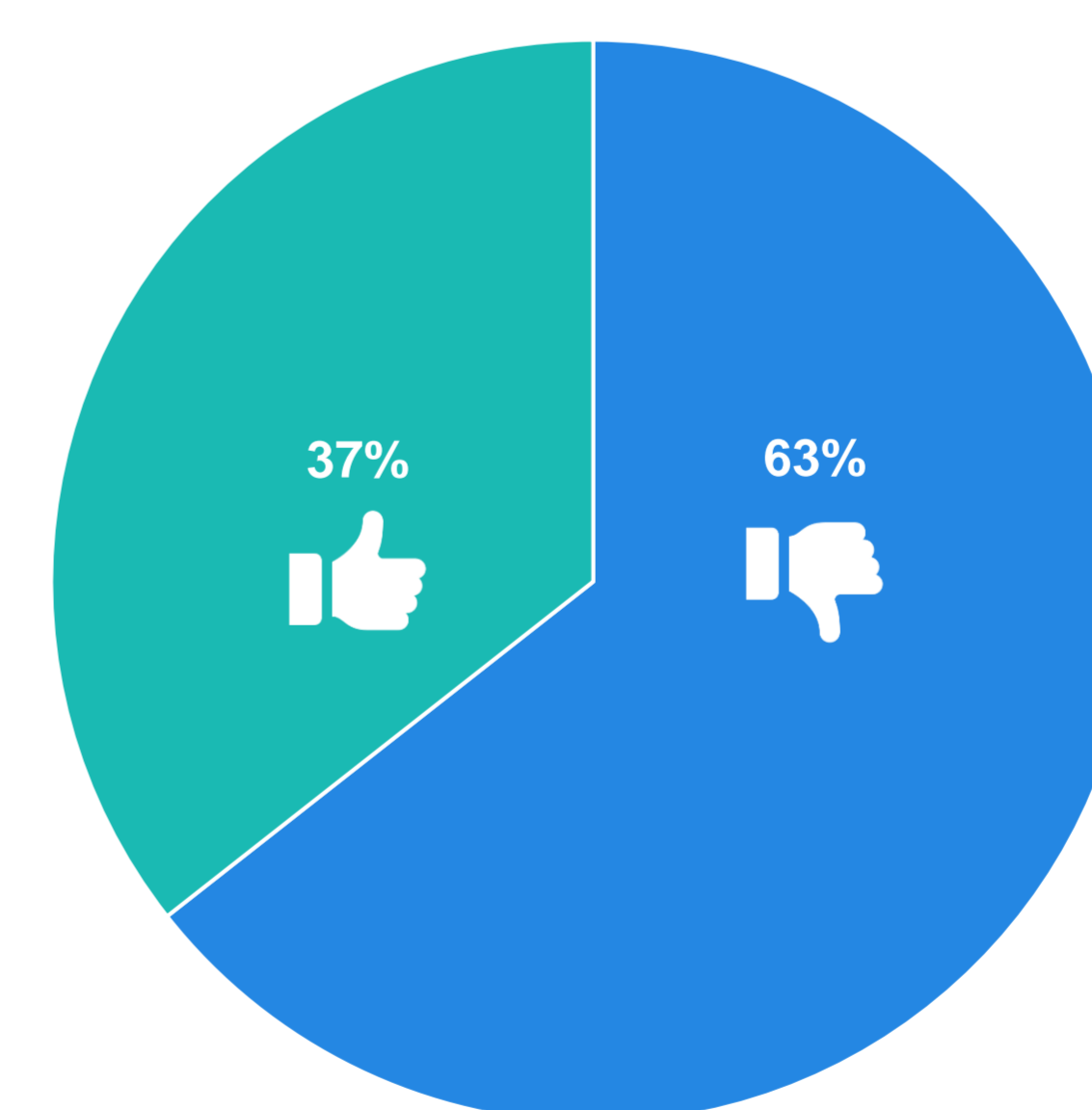


Figure 3. Referrers reported ease of following referral process



### Values

Regarding overall value of diabetes care, those who were aware that they could refer clients to SPE (n=45, 68.2%) value diabetes care significantly more than those who were not aware (n=21, 31.8%)  $p=0.009$ .

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Overall, healthcare providers held generally positive attitudes and values towards the need for structured patient education for type 2 diabetes.
- ii. However, our findings indicate there is a need to build improved awareness of the referral pathway and the referral process in the HSE Mid-West region.
- iii. There is a need for training healthcare providers to support them be able to 'sell' SPE to patients.
- iv. There is a need for training, resources and support for healthcare providers to ensure structured patient education is adequately embedded in the routine care for people with type 2 diabetes.
- v. Issue conclusions and recommendations to Dietitian Manager and Operational Team Lead, Integrated Care, Chronic Disease Mid-West Community Healthcare region.