Abstract:

AIMS/HYPOTHESIS: The aim of this study was to identify the health care costs of diabetic patients in Germany in 2001, focusing on the influence of age, sex, and type of treatment.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS: Annual direct costs of medical care and indirect costs of inability to work and early retirement in diabetic subjects were compared with costs of age- and sex-matched non-diabetic control subjects. The analysis was based on routine health care data from a random sample (18.75%) taken from a database of 1.9 million insured persons. Incremental differences in medical and national expenditure between subjects with and without diabetes were calculated. RESULTS: Annual direct mean costs per diabetic patient were 5,262, and indirect costs were 5,019. In the control group, mean direct and indirect costs were 2,755 and 3,691, respectively. Analysis of cost components revealed that the high costs associated with the care of diabetic patients could be largely attributed to inpatient care and overall medication costs. Hypoglycaemic drugs amounted to only one-quarter of the medication costs. The total health care costs were correlated with the type of treatment. Direct excess costs increased with increasing age in insulin-treated patients, but were unaffected by age in patients receiving other types of treatment.

CONCLUSIONS/INTERPRETATION: The Costs of Diabetes Mellitus (CoDiM) study is the first comprehensive study to provide...
estimates of costs associated with diabetes care in Germany. Direct costs of diabetic patients account for 14.2% of total health care costs, which includes the proportion that specifically accounts for diabetes-related costs (6.8%).

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