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An audit of diabetic foot care on the haemodialysis unit

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Patients with diabetes with end stage renal failure are known to be at high risk of foot ulceration and the risk of amputation increases tenfold.

**Aim:** To assess management and nursing care of diabetic foot ulcers on the haemodialysis unit (HDU) and referral to the diabetes team.  
**Method:** Prospective audit over 6 weeks. Data was collected from the medical notes and interview with patients. **Results:** 64 patients were assessed. So far we have collated data for 40 patients. Majority of them were men (n=30, 75%). 7 patients (17.5%) had type 1 diabetes. Mean HbA1c was 7.4% (58 mmol/mol, range HbA1c 5.7% to 12%). Three (7.5%) patients have had major amputations. Five (12.5%) patients have had previous ulcers and five (12.5%) other patients had current blisters or ulcers. Only 4 (10%) patients had surgical footwear. 29 patients were wearing their own footwear. Five patients had attended the HDU with socks only. Thirteen (32.5%) patients did not recall attending for an annual review in the past 18 months. Two patients (both with type 2 diabetes and both male, 62 and 65 y old) have died. Five patients were still smoking. Of the remaining 38 alive patients only 13 (34.2%) had regular podiatry input. Only 11 (28.9 %) patients recalled having their feet checked by the HDU staff when they attended for dialysis. Only 2 (40%) of the 5 patients with foot ulcers and blisters had been referred to the diabetes foot team. 6 (15.8%) patients had been referred to the diabetes team because of their poor diabetic control. **Conclusions:** It is apparent that patients on the HDU with diabetic foot problems are not receiving appropriate foot care. We are about to implement "Putting Feet First" (new guidance aimed at improving diabetes foot care in hospitals) nursing assessments on all the wards at our hospital and the pilot ward will be the haemodialysis unit and we will reaudit to assess any improvement.