

## TARGET 7 SURVEY FACT SHEET

The Target 7 survey was coordinated by the Hong Kong Specialist Medical Association (HK SMA) to evaluate the opinions and attitudes of people living with type 2 diabetes in Hong Kong. The survey specifically designed to build a greater understanding of the level of knowledge among type 2 diabetes patients regarding their condition and the importance of good blood glucose control and the 7% target HbA1c level. For further information on type 2 diabetes and HbA1c see the Type 2 Diabetes Fact Sheet.

### About the Survey

The Target 7 survey was undertaken by the Public Opinion Programme of the University of Hong Kong and used a randomized telephone survey methodology. The survey asked a range of questions, designed to understand patient views on their diagnosis, understanding of their condition, HbA1c, blood glucose control and the complications associated with type 2 diabetes.

The following represents a summary of the key findings from the survey.

### Survey Information

The survey was conducted in May 2012 with responses from a total of 506 people living with type 2 diabetes (274 females and 232 males)

Respondents reflect the broad geographic spread of the Hong Kong population, with 91 respondents (18%) from Hong Kong Island, 163 (32%) from Kowloon and 248 (49%) from the New Territories

The majority of respondents received their medical care from doctors in the public sector (91%), with 52% of patients receiving the majority of their medical care from general practitioners (GPs) and 39% from specialist doctors

### Diagnosing Type 2 Diabetes

- 40% of patients did not experience any symptoms before being diagnosed
- Of those that did experience symptoms, 43% were diagnosed within 3 months of first experiencing symptoms, while for 32% of patients it took longer than 4 months

### Understanding of Type 2 Diabetes

- Over a third of patients (35%) said they felt they were not informed about their condition
- A further fifth of patients (22%) said that they felt neither informed or uninformed about their type 2 diabetes
- 20% of patients said that they were unaware of what complications diabetes could lead to
- The majority of patients (74%) said that they do not understand how the medication they are using works to control their blood glucose level
- 70% of patients also said that they were unaware of the possible side-effects associated with their medication

## HbA1c and Blood Glucose Control

- The majority of patients (73%) claim not to have heard of HbA1c, the main measurement used by doctors to assess how well controlled a patient's type 2 diabetes is managed – the proportion of patients saying they are unaware of the term is similar between patients treated by general practitioners (72%) and those treated by specialists (73%)
- Only 9% of respondents were able to correctly state that 7% is the optimal HbA1c target, with 39% of patients saying that they did not know what an optimal or good HbA1c level was for someone with type 2 diabetes
- Approximately a fifth (19%) of respondents claim that they only check their HbA1c at least once a year, with the majority of patients (60%) saying that they check their HbA1c at least once every 2 – 6 months
- 37% of respondents were unaware what their current HbA1c level was and of those that felt able to answer 35% had an HbA1c level of 8% or greater (110 patients)
- 17% of respondents said that they felt their diabetes was not well controlled
- Results show a strong correlation between a person's HbA1c level and how well controlled they felt their diabetes was, with those respondents saying that their disease was uncontrolled reporting a higher HbA1c level than those that felt their diabetes was controlled
- While a majority of patients (76%) said that they believe self-monitoring of blood glucose is important, a third of patients (34%) said that they never self-check their blood glucose level

## Understanding the Complications Associated with Type 2 Diabetes

- Type 2 diabetes patients often confuse the complications associated with hyperglycemia (high blood sugar) and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) – illustrating a general lack of awareness and understanding about their condition
- While 89% of respondents were able to identify at least one complication associated with hyperglycemia, 78% of respondents gave at least one incorrect answer when asked to list the complications associated with hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia

## Accessing Information on Type 2 Diabetes

- Over half of respondents (58%) said that they rely on their family doctor and other healthcare professionals to get information on their type 2 diabetes
- Over a fifth of patients (23%) rely on pamphlets, leaflets and posters for information about their condition and a large number of patients rely on the media for information:
  - 24% rely on newspapers
  - 18% rely on television
  - 10% rely on the radio