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## POSTER ABSTRACT

# "I am not just a place for implementation. I should be a partner": A qualitative study of patient perceptions of their involvement in care in Saudi Arabia

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**Introduction:** Patient involvement in care is a major component of high quality care and is becoming recognized worldwide with many benefits for improving patient outcomes. However, little is known about patient involvement in care in the Middle East region.

**Objectives:** To evaluate patients' perceptions of their involvement during their interactions with health care providers in Saudi Arabia.

**Methods:** A qualitative exploratory study using semi structured interviews was conducted from February 2022 to March 2022. Responses were transcribed and analysed using a thematic data analysis approach.

**Results:** We conducted seven interviews with patients with diabetes ranging in age from 19 to 69 years old. We identified the following themes: 1) patients' perceptions of their involvement in care, 2) barriers to patient involvement, 3) effective communication, 4) empathy, and 5) culture. We found that patients had minimal knowledge of patient involvement in care

**Conclusion:** There is a clear need to improve education and awareness of patient involvement in health care in Saudi Arabia. By educating patients about the possibilities of patient involvement and explaining their role it will make it easier for patients to understand appropriate levels of involvement. In addition, there is a need to understand and establish frameworks which acknowledge the impact of culture on patient centred care in Saudi Arabia.

**Key words:** patient involvement, patient centered care, Saudi Arabia