

UC San Diego

Family Medicine Research Day 2024

Title

Let's Dia-BEAT-This: Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Diabetic Clinical Outcomes at the UC San Diego Student Run Free Clinic Project

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/41c56444>

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Publication Date

2024-06-21

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced and worsened many barriers to accessing healthcare, especially in the management of diabetes. To no surprise, this resulted in poorer glycemic control and delays in routine screening in patients with diabetes. While a prior study has shown the high-quality diabetes care that patients receive at the UC San Diego Student Run Free Clinic Project (SRFCP), this project examined the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on diabetes management in this unique population. Diabetes outcome measures were analyzed within the two years prior to, and the two years immediately following the start of the pandemic and compared to previously published outcomes of the SRFCP. For many of the process measures and diabetes clinical outcome measures, there was no difference to or even an improvement during the pandemic. During the pandemic, patients with diabetes recorded higher systolic blood pressures and lower triglyceride values. Female patients with diabetes also saw improvements in their HDL levels. Unsurprisingly, the pandemic saw fewer patients receiving blood pressure measurements compared to prior to the pandemic. The maintenance of high-quality diabetes care for SRFCP patients despite barriers erected during the pandemic is a reflection of the tireless efforts of the providers and staff at the SRFCP.