

**Factors influencing insulin initiation in primary care facilities in Cape Town,  
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**Background:** Type 2 diabetes (T2DM) is a leading cause of mortality in South Africa and resistance to the use of insulin is common. This study aimed to explore factors that influence the initiation of insulin in patients with T2DM in primary care facilities in Cape Town, South Africa.

**Methods:** An exploratory descriptive qualitative study was conducted. Seventeen semi-structured interviews were held with patients eligible for insulin, on insulin and primary care providers. Participants were selected by maximum variation purposive sampling. Data were analysed using the framework method in Atlas-ti.

**Results:** Factors related to the health system, service delivery, clinical care and patients. Systemic issues related to the required inputs of workforce, educational materials, and supplies. Service delivery issues related to workload, poor continuity and parallel coordination of care. Clinical issues related to adequate counselling. Patient factors included a lack of trust, concerns about injections, impact on lifestyle and disposal of needles.

**Conclusion:** Although resource constraints are likely to remain, district and facility managers can improve supplies, educational materials, continuity and coordination. Counselling must be improved and may require innovative alternative approaches to support clinicians who face high number of patients. Alternative approaches using group education, telehealth and digital solutions should be considered.

**Contribution:** This study identified key factors influencing insulin initiation in patients with T2DM in primary care. These can be addressed by those responsible for clinical governance, service delivery and in further research.

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