DEFINE:diabetes exercise and fitness needs. A study investigating physical activity and exercise in adults with diabetes.

**Aims**

Physical activity is a key component in the management of diabetes. Physical activity improves metabolic control which tackles cardiovascular risk factors and other associated co-morbidities. Most people with diabetes do not engage in recommended levels of physical activity due to a range of modifiable factors. This study (i) explored the unique perspectives of adults with diabetes in terms of barriers, facilitators and explicit needs and preferences in relation to physical activity and (2) informed the development of (a) *sustainable* physical activity intervention(s) for adults with diabetes.

**Methods**

A qualitative methodology incorporating focus group discussions, individual semi-structured interviews and case studies was employed. Seventy adults aged 18+ with either Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes participated in the study.

**Results**

Participation and sustained engagement in physical activity for those with diabetes is hugely variable and demands sophisticated self-management skills. Findings indicated that health status, body image, secondary complications, knowing how to balance physical activity with diabetes, fear of hypos, self-efficacy, motivation and prior physical activity experiences are all contributory factors. Adults need education focused on physical activity and diabetes and most importantly individualised support. A diabetes physical activity weekend was advocated as a means of enabling those with diabetes to learn about diabetes and physical activity, and try out different activities, in a supportive environment.

**Conclusion**

A diabetes and physical activity weekend is currently being developed in partnership with adults with diabetes. This intervention will provide the opportunity for long-term behaviour change and subsequent improvement in health status.