



CURE | HEALTH SERVICES

Project: Evaluating a diabetes remission strategy and support in primary care

Through donor support, Dr. Diana Sherifali, Associate Professor in the School of Nursing at McMaster University and the inaugural holder of the Heather M. Arthur Population Health Research Institute/Hamilton Health Sciences Chair in Inter-Professional Health Research, is testing whether type 2 diabetes can be reversed.

In healthy individuals, blood sugars are controlled by a hormone called insulin, which lowers blood sugar levels. For people with type 2 diabetes, they can no longer produce or use enough insulin to control their blood sugars, which can lead to health complications such as nerve damage, sight loss, heart disease, kidney failure, anxiety, amputations, and even death.

Recent clinical trials testing an intense combination of oral medications, insulin and lifestyle interventions for four months found that up to 40 per cent of participants did not require any diabetes medications for several months after stopping them. This supports the theory that type 2 diabetes might be reversed, at least in the short term, with the correct evidence-based strategies.

Dr. Sherifali and her team are testing the effectiveness of an intensive diabetes remission strategy in individuals living with type 2 diabetes, and will examine:

- if participants can achieve diabetic remission
- how participants' quality of life is impacted
- what challenges and opportunities the strategy faces in a real-world setting

This could lead to a new strategy to potentially reverse type 2 diabetes, and evaluate how people with diabetes and health care providers can best implement this strategy.