Title
Improving diabetes competencies in dietitians: evaluation of a training programme

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Aim
Dietary interventions for people with diabetes can be complex and are often delivered by dietitians in non-specialist roles. In 2011, Diabetes UK published a competency framework for dietitians designed to improve the delivery of nutritional advice to all people with diabetes. The aim of this initiative was to design and evaluate a structured training programme to improve diabetes competencies in non-specialist dietitians working in the adult service in Oxfordshire.

Methods
Two three-hour education sessions were designed, matched specifically to the published framework. The education sessions were formulated from a structured curriculum and delivered by trained diabetes dietitians. The sessions covered most aspects of the management of diabetes in different groups, and diabetes education. Training was delivered using a variety of formats to encourage participation. Quantitative assessment took place by means of a multiple-choice questionnaire (MCQ) completed immediately before and after each session, and qualitative assessment was achieved using visual analogue scales (VAS). For both methods of assessment, the maximum score was 100% and the minimum 0%.

Results
76% (41/54) of eligible dietitians completed training by September 2016. Mean scores assessed by MCQ increased from 63.0% to 92.9% after session 1, and from 69.1% to 90.5% after session 2, demonstrating an overall increase from 66.1% to 91.7%. 83% of participants completed visual analogue scales and reported scores of 90% for the usefulness of the sessions, 85% for increased knowledge and 82% for increased confidence after training.

Conclusion
A training programme improved diabetes competencies in dietitians and was well-received.

Word count: 248