

70% women unable to proactively manage diabetes and undertake self-care plans: Portea

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A recent analysis of over 12,000 diabetes patients by Portea Medical has revealed that men outnumber women exponentially when it comes to selecting a diabetes care plan. The findings are based on the patients on Portea's InControl programme and reveal that even the tech-savvy women deprioritize their health. About 70% of them are unable to manage their diet due to busy schedules.

Women also seem to join the program at a relatively more advanced stage compared to men. The average fasting blood glucose level (FBS) for men who opted for the program was 155 while that for women stood at 165. The maximum engagement from women for Portea's programme came from Karnataka (16%) followed by Kerala (13%). The trends are a result of Portea's experience with customers as part of the Portea InControl programme over the last 6 months.

Speaking about this, Meena Ganesh, Managing Director and CEO, Portea Medical, said, "We have seen some interesting trends emerge from patient behaviour. Of the people who are joining the program, most have recently been diagnosed with Diabetes and are seeking a solution to manage their conditions without impacting their lives and livelihood. Even though, the percentage of women is far less than that of the men, women on the program are far more compliant than their male counterparts. They attend their counselling calls, follow their diets and are always ready with their parameters to be discussed in their scheduled calls. Portea believes that with the right product offerings, a great infrastructure can be built for helping people manage their disease along with their doctors, without the hassle of queuing up at clinics. This is what we are also trying to achieve with our comprehensive programme called Portea InControl."

Portea's findings also indicate that about 47% of the women patients were suffering from diabetes for more than 5 years compared to 35% men. However, it is encouraging that about 30% of women with diabetes are serious about following the doctor's recommendations and indicated that they are keen to gather maximum information on how to manage it. There is thus a need to counsel and handhold them to ensure that they understand the intimal impacts of the disease.

The study also found some challenges around the lack of access to diabetes management programmes such as poor connectivity, rescheduling of counselling calls, and lack of knowledge on how to use devices to monitor their condition. Many patients in the study believed that managing diabetes is more of a function of diet and exercise and less of medical supervision. About 74% of the patients in the program used the glucometer for the first time after joining the program.