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„Limitations of access to the treatment of Diabetic Retinopathy and Diabetic Macular Edema from the perspective of the Polish healthcare system”

SUMMARY

In Poland there are over 2.3 million patients with diabetes, 11% with diabetic complications, leading to other disorders. Diabetic Retinopathy (DR) is a serious eye disease that develops as a result of complications of diabetes. DR progress leads to a gradual deterioration of vision, including loss of vision in the case of improper or ineffective treatment. All diabetic patients are at risk of developing DR. Any degree of diabetic retinopathy in diabetic patients is estimated at 34.6% of the general population. Diabetic Macular Edema (DME) is a microvascular degeneration associated with DR, leading to a significant deterioration of visual acuity. All diabetic patients are at risk of developing DME. The incidence of DME is estimated at 7.48% of the total population of patients with diabetes. Along with the therapeutic progress in ophthalmology, the diversity of medical procedures with healthcare providers is increasing. Is the access to ophthalmic treatment in Poland sufficient, optimized and balanced in terms of accessibility? Does the financing of DR and DME diagnosis and treatment follow demographic processes?

Conclusions: Taking into account the numerical data, epidemiological facts and questions presented in the paper, it seems that there are quite significant limitations in the access to treatment of Diabetic Retinopathy and Diabetic Macular Edema in Poland. They have their sources both in processes related to the diagnosis of these diseases, as well as access to treatment and how the funds are allocated. Therefore, it should be considered taking actions as recommended at the dissertation.