

being obese or centrally obese, level of urbanization, having another chronic medical condition, educational level, marital status, work status and smoking status. It was found that ages  $\geq 40$ , centrally obesity, and hypertensive subjects were more likely to report DM (odds ratio = 3.75, 1.82, 1.49  $p < 0.05$ ). Those with higher levels of cholesterol were less likely to report diabetes accurately. As regards to self-reporting of hypertension, females, age  $\geq 40$ , obese subjects, and with impaired fasting glucose were more likely to report hypertensive accurately than others. Rural residents were less likely to do that. The overall agreement above chance was fair for DM while it was poor for hypertension. From the results, we could notice that the kappa statistics of self-reporting of DM was higher than that of hypertension. Our finding is consistent with what Bowlin et al<sup>4</sup> who found in their study that self-reporting of DM has a better validity than that of hypertension.

Awareness of having DM or being hypertensive was positively associated in our study with older age group, female gender, being obese or centrally obese, level of urbanization, and having another chronic medical condition. Misreporting of chronic medical condition in our study did not differ by respondents' level of education, which is consistent with what Kriegsman et al<sup>5</sup> found in their study. They found using the multivariate analyses that educational level, and level of urbanization had no influence on the level of accuracy. An influence of gender, age and recent contact with the general practitioner was shown for specific diseases.

We conclude that depending only on self-reporting information of DM or hypertension, or both, would lead to inaccurate estimates of their prevalence rates, suggesting the need for including the clinical ascertainment in any population based epidemiological study.

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## Residents' perception of the journal club

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Journal club meetings have become a part and parcel of formal postgraduate medical education.<sup>1,2</sup> It can be defined as an educational meeting where a group of individuals discuss articles, but it has been noted that it has become a matter of skill presentation and this is due to lack of critical appraisal. Postgraduate mentors and faculty staff are striving constantly to make these journal clubs as fruitful as possible by suggesting different approaches. The recent article by Dwarakanath and Khan<sup>3</sup> is one of the good examples of these efforts. Residents are the postgraduate trainees with both educational and clinical commitments. In addition to their day to day work and clinical responsibilities, they are supposed to take active part in postgraduate teaching activities with the journal club presentation as one of the postgraduate scientific sessions. The main objective of these journal club meetings is to provide the residents with a forum to remain abreast with the current literature.<sup>4</sup> However, despite of this awareness, it has been observed that residents lack the motivation.<sup>5</sup> We conducted this study to look further into this and to get residents' view on the journal club.

The study was conducted in the Department of Pediatrics at King Faisal University, Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Residents at different level of postgraduate training in pediatrics were asked to respond to the 10-item questionnaire on what they think of the present status of journal club meetings. Ten residents completed the questionnaire. **Table 1** depicts the results of the questionnaire. Two items clearly had a negative while 8 had a positive responses. Additional comments, some residents thought that journal club should be replaced with more grand rounds and case discussion, some suggested that weekly journal club meeting is too frequent. The study clearly demonstrated that most of the residents had a positive attitudes towards the journal club. In contradiction to the assumption, only one resident chose presentation in English as problem, so language was not thought to be a barrier in the journal club presentation. Furthermore, most residents voted for journal club meetings as no waste of time and agreed that this meeting enhances research understanding. However, majority thought that it is of limited clinical use. That might be reflective of their preoccupation with laboratory-based or animal-based bench research articles.

**Role of faculty (mentor).** From the study findings, it looked clearly that residents expect more support from their mentors, as most of them voted strongly for item 3, 9 and 10. A solution to this problem could be a prior consultation with their mentors before the presentation. By doing that, the faculty can guide the residents not only in proper article selection but also in making them understand and present the article smoothly. The

Table 1 - Residents' response to the questionnaire (N=10).

Items	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Undecided %	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Conclusions
Objectives unclear	None	40	10	20	30	Yes, objectives of journal club are not clear
Guidelines not available	20	20	20	20	20	Equivocal response
No help from the faculty	20	40	20	10	10	Yes, no help from the faculty
Of limited clinical use	30	20	20	10	20	Yes, journal club are of limited clinical use
Waste of time	20	20	10	20	30	No, journal club is not a waste of time
Enhance research understanding*	10	30	20	20	10	Yes, journal club enhances research thinking
Difficult to conduct in English	None	10	20	10	60	No, English is not a problem for journal club
Articles difficult to find	None	50	10	None	40	Yes, articles for journal club are difficult to find
Articles should be chosen by the faculty	40	30	20	10	None	Yes, faculty should chose article for journal club
Lack of feedback	10	40	20	10	20	Yes, need feedback

\*no response from one resident

problem or complaint regarding the poor feedback could also be eliminated by following this approach. Lastly, residents' view on difficulty in finding the journal articles could be discussed and reported to the faculty, as faculty can guide them for interesting, relevant and recent articles. Also, many faculty members have their own subscriptions of international highly rated journals, which could be easily accessed if not found in the library. Internet could also be used as rescue.

In conclusion, most of the residents thought that journal club is a productive postgraduate activity and it should continue with slight modifications and more support from the faculty.

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## β-thalassemia major

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The thalassemias are heterogeneous group of genetic disorders in which the production of normal hemoglobin (Hb) is partly or completely suppressed due to defective synthesis of one or more globin chains. Several types of thalassemia have been described. The most common type is β-thalassemia in which β-globin synthesis is either reduced or totally absent. β-thalassemia major, historically known as Cooley anemia, is the homozygous form of this disease. It has been estimated that there are probably as many as 100,000 living patients with β-thalassemia major in the world. Madinah Maternity and Children's Hospital