India is home to 69 million people with type-2 diabetes. A serious complication of the disease is foot ulcers, which significantly increase a patient’s risk of amputation and death as well as financial burden.

Every year 100,000 amputations are carried out in India due to diabetes-related conditions, 80% of which have the potential to be avoided if regular foot examinations are carried out to identify risk factors.

iDSI supported India’s Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to develop an evidence-based guideline for foot care in diabetes patients. Quality Standards (QS) were derived from this guideline within primary care in Mumbai, resulting in the identification of patients at risk of neuropathy and peripheral arterial disease who may have otherwise gone undetected.

### Summary

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<th>Foot disease affects nearly 4 million diabetes patients in India</th>
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### Recommendations

- Foot examinations should be offered to everyone with diabetes as part of the standard treatment pathway
- Multidisciplinary diabetic foot care centres should be established in hospitals, providing foot protection services such as callus debridement and nail care; and surgeries such as wound debridement and amputations
- National evidence-based guidance should be implemented at State-level as one of the ways India can tackle complications of its diabetes

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842 diabetes patients had their feet checked in just six months as part of a pilot Quality Standards project potentially avoiding future amputation.

80% of amputations carried out in India (80,000 out of 100,000) each year could be avoided with regular foot examinations.

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Uncontrolled blood sugar levels can damage organs and tissues, including the nerves and blood vessels in the feet, making them susceptible to injuries that fail to heal and turn gangrenous. When this occurs, amputation is the only option.

Foot disease affects nearly 4 million diabetes patients in India (6% of the total number of diabetics). Of the 100,000 leg amputations carried out every year, many are preventable as they occur following an infected neuropathic foot. After a major amputation, 50% will have another limb amputated within two years; and people with a history of diabetic foot ulcers are 40% more likely to die within 10 years than people with diabetes alone.

Establishing multidisciplinary foot protection services, that use national evidence-based guidance, would likely result in fewer hospital referrals and significant savings for patients and service providers.

After a major amputation, **50%** of patients will have another limb amputated within **2 years**

Neuropathy was found in **9%** of the patients and peripheral arterial disease was found in **0.5%**

- Number of adults living with diabetes in India has increased more than five-fold since 1980
- 100,000 leg amputations carried out each year in India due to diabetes-related conditions
- Diabetic foot ulcers contribute to **80%** of all non-traumatic amputations in India
- After a major amputation, **50%** of diabetes patients in India will have another limb amputated within two years
- **5.7 years** of an average patient’s income in India would be required to pay for complete diabetic foot ulcer therapy


National guidance for curative as well as preventative methods for diabetic feet need to be implemented at State-level in India.

Early clinical assessment of diabetic feet is crucial to prevent people with diabetes getting foot ulcers which can lead to amputations that carry huge personal and economic cost.

Local data should be reviewed and cost-impact analysis research carried out regularly to measure India’s quality of care for diabetic foot disease.