

A CASE STUDY

Reducing variations in care for patients with Diabetes across Newham

Newham, East London, faces some significant challenges in improving the healthcare of its 250,000 residents. It has one of the most ethnically diverse populations in the country and is the eleventh most deprived area in England.

Newham Local Healthcare Community (LHC), comprised of Newham University Hospital NHS Trust and NHS Newham, is using the Map of Medicine as a key enabler in helping to benchmark delivery, promote the benefits of information technology and online care pathways. In addition, the Map has been used to improve the communication of the details of services available in the LHC, and reduce variations in the delivery of healthcare - in this case for patients with diabetes.

On current trends, the national diabetes prevalence rate will increase by 15% between 2001 and 2010 and care is estimated to account for 10% of all current NHS expenditure. Diabetes is prevalent in around 5% of Newham's population. Type 2 diabetes can reduce life expectancy by up to seven years, and, according to Saving Lives 2007, reporting rates for patients with type 2 diabetes can be up to three times higher in black and ethnic minority groups, making this a key focus area for NHS Newham.



"Having local referral forms, guidance and healthy living leaflets on the Newham Diabetes pathway is really useful for patients and doctors alike, as the material is personalised and relevant to our area. The pathway is easy to follow for anybody new to diabetes management and a good teaching resource for medical students."

Dr Sanjay J Parmar, GP.

You can view the Newham Diabetes pathway on the Map of Medicine by changing your view to Newham

Project

Newham LHC had developed care pathways for numerous conditions but their uptake was slow and benefits not realised.

As part of the North East London Collaborative Commissioning Group, Newham is using the Map of Medicine to enhance the quality of care for all patients, implement national and local targets and better measure their success. The Map was chosen as it had a range of best clinical practice and evidence based pathways and offered the flexibility to be localised.

The scope of the original project was to localise the type 2 diabetes pathway but this was extended to cover the diabetes in pregnancy and diabetes in children and adolescents pathways. This aligned the scope of the diabetes programme that NHS Newham has embarked with the Healthcare for London recommendations.

A series of workshops were held to redesign the diabetes pathways, which included secondary care consultants, GPs, allied health professionals, commissioners and patients.



The key milestones were to clinically localise and publish the pathways, incorporate local administration information and promote implementation through launch events, presentations and practice visits.

Aims

The aims of the project were to use a local care pathway as a means of improving the delivery of diabetes care and to reduce the variation in the delivery of care for patients.

Newham wanted to manage all appropriate patients in primary care, reduce unnecessary referrals to secondary care and ensure patients who need to be referred to secondary care were referred at the most appropriate time, without delay.

They also wanted to assist Practice based Commissioning units with their business case to redesign and develop community-based consultant led clinics for diabetes and to use the Map of Medicine to manage the new pathway, referral criteria and clinical development.

Challenges

The key challenges for Newham were successfully engaging IT, clinical teams and the acute trust. The implementation process was particularly difficult as launch events and group presentations in both primary and secondary care were not well attended. This was resolved through individual practice visits and demonstrations, presentations at Clinical Risk Group meeting at the acute as well as working with champions. An important lesson learnt was to schedule workshops early, especially for secondary care clinicians and clinical leads.

Results

Pathways and the Map of Medicine have become an integral part of NHS Newham's planning stage of the commissioning cycle leading to improved engagement, clinical collaboration and patient input. More than a third of GPs, practice nurses and other healthcare professionals are now registered to use the Map.

Since the Diabetes pathway was launched, Newham has seen a reduction of 14% in the first to follow up ratios for Newham University Hospitals Trust, despite an increase in the number of outpatient attendances to secondary care. Initial results also indicate an improvement in medicines management.

The pathway localisation process assisted in the re-commissioning of the diabetic retinal screening service.

Next Steps

Newham LHC is moving towards incorporating pathway development work into business as usual and further local pathways will be prioritised as an integral part of the Strategic Planning stage in the World Class Commissioning process.

Access to the Map of Medicine is also being extended to community pharmacy contractors in order to signpost patients to other services. The success of this will be closely monitored and may also be used to monitor the contractual fulfilment of this element of the pharmacy contract.

Aims

- Improve the delivery of diabetes care and reduce the variation in the delivery of care for patients
- Manage all appropriate patients in primary care reduce unnecessary referrals to secondary care, and ensure patients are referred at the most appropriate time, without delay
- Assist practice based units redesign and develop community-based consultant led clinics for diabetes.

Challenges

- Engaging IT, clinical teams and the acute trust
- This was resolved through individual practice visits and demonstrations and early scheduling.

Results

- Newham has seen a reduction of 14% in the first to follow up ratios for Newham University Hospitals Trust, despite an increase in the number of outpatient attendances to secondary care
- An improvement in medicines management
- More than a third of GPs, practice nurses and other healthcare professionals are registered to use the Map.



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