

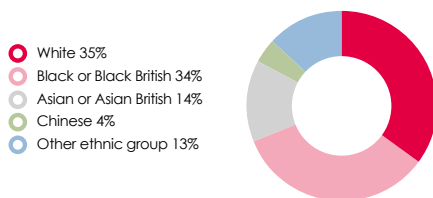
SUPPORTING SELF-MANAGEMENT WITH A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Implementing the Co-creating Health Diabetes Self-Management Programme (SMP)

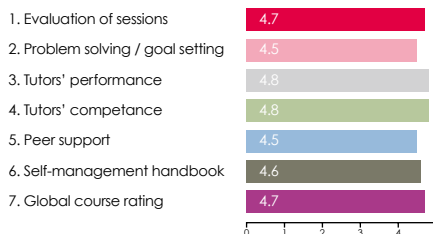
**Dr Maria Barnard
Catherine Jenkins
Janice Mavroskoufis
Siobhan Harrington**
for the CCH Steering Group
Department of Diabetes
The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust,
NHS Islington and NHS Haringey
London, United Kingdom

Context The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust, NHS Islington and NHS Haringey are located in north central London, serving a diverse urban population.

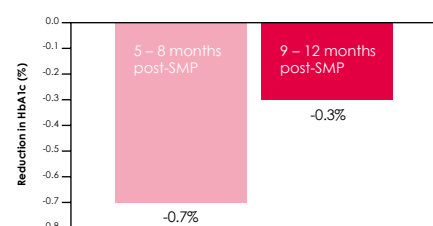
Ethnicity of SMP participants



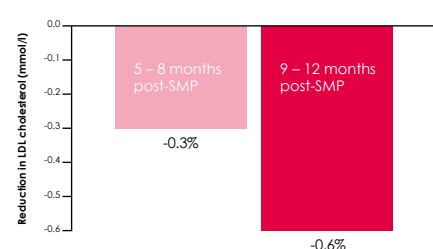
Patient evaluation of SMP (scored out of 5)



HbA1c after SMP



LDL cholesterol after SMP



We were selected as a diabetes test site for The Health Foundation's Co-creating Health (CCH) programme, a national demonstration programme aiming to make self-management an integral part of care for people with long-term conditions. We formed a partnership between primary and secondary care and between patients and clinicians.

Problem

London performs significantly worse in most diabetes performance indicators than the rest of the UK. We serve a multi-ethnic population with significant health needs. We aimed to provide self-management training for patients, to improve care and encourage collaborative working.

The national survey of people with diabetes had shown only 15.7% of local people with diabetes had participated in an education/training course on how to manage their diabetes. After being selected by the Health Foundation, we were involved in developing the CCH Self-Management Programme (SMP) for people with type 2 diabetes.

Intervention

Each SMP consists of 3-hour weekly sessions, over seven weeks in a group setting (16 patients). A Clinician Tutor and Lay Tutor deliver the SMP in an equitable teaching partnership that mirrors the therapeutic relationship. The course combines self-management techniques (problem solving, being more active, communication, goal setting, action planning) with information about diabetes. The groups are able to share the experience of living with diabetes with other people who understand.

Study design

An observational, semi-quantitative assessment, measuring patient evaluation of SMP and biomedical markers pre/post SMP.

Strategy for change

We set up a Steering Group of primary and secondary care staff and patients to direct the project. We identified patients (7) and clinicians (7) to train as SMP tutors from a variety of backgrounds, including Dietitians, Diabetes Specialist Nurses, Practice Nurses. We run 10-12 courses per year.

Measurement of improvement

Patient perceptions of the SMP were elicited by written statements, which the patients agreed with on a 5 point-scale, from (1) 'not at all' to (5) 'very much'. Improvement in diabetes control was measured by audit of blood tests on the laboratory results system. This compared overall glucose control (HbA1c), lipids and renal function before and over one year after attending SMP. Results are expressed as mean [\pm SD]. Paired t-test assessed significance.

Effects of changes

To date, 202 patients have completed 22 SMP courses.

- They highly valued the SMP (global course rating 9.5/10).
- High scores were given for problem solving / goal setting activities (4.5/5) and peer support (4.5/5).
- All would advise other patients to attend.
- After the SMP, there was a significant improvement in HbA1c (-0.7% [\pm 1.7] at 5-8 months, $p < 0.05$; -0.3% [\pm 0.7] at 9-12 months, $p < 0.05$) and in LDL cholesterol (-0.6 mmol/l [\pm 0.8] at 9-12 months, $p < 0.05$).

Lessons learnt

The rate of attrition has been low but recruiting patients onto the SMP has been challenging. The most successful method was a personal invitation letter from the Diabetes Consultant (39% of participants). Raising awareness of the SMP in primary care and amongst patients has been important (e.g. meetings, posters, coffee mornings). Some clinicians have noted more success in recruiting patients with intermediate levels of diabetes control (HbA1c 7.5-9.0%). We have run a SMP in a GP practice and may concentrate on this approach in the future.

Message for others

This innovative, collaborative model provides an effective approach to support diabetes self-management. Ongoing course reunions continue to provide peer support and occasions for personal goal setting, potentially sustaining health improvements. This project has been an opportunity for greater working with our patients: some SMP graduates have trained as Lay Tutors and others have formed a 'Core Group' to inform service development. This is an extremely valuable resource for future service improvement projects.

"What I liked about the course was meeting other diabetics with different problems and finding lots of solutions."