

Co-creating Health

Self-management patient walk-about at The Whittington Hospital

We followed Mary, a Type 2 diabetic patient, through a typical appointment at the Whittington Hospital with a Diabetes Specialist Nurse.



10.00 am Mary arrives for her appointment at the Whittington Hospital by ambulance due to her disability. She had arranged the transport and the appointment herself to be at a time to suit her. Her experience was positive; she did not have to wait long to be picked up although she did point out that "sometimes I can be waiting a very long time for transport."



10.15am Mary is taken up by the porter to the clinic reception where she waits for her appointment.

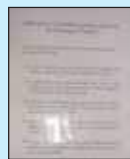
Here are some of the leaflets available in the waiting room. Although Mary would be able to reach the lower leaflets, the higher ones would be impossible to get to and the display could be reviewed.

There were some posters promoting the benefit of self-management "Just 30 minutes of physical activity every day reduces your risk of heart disease and can help prevent Type 2 diabetes. Small steps lead to big benefits"



10.30am Mary is seen by the Diabetes Specialist Nurse to review her progress. Mary had been keeping a record of her blood sugar levels at home and these were examined by Mary and the DSN together, encouraging Mary to feel in control of her own diabetes. A new machine was given out so that Mary could continue to check levels at home.

The sheet to record her readings was given to Mary by her GP. The A4 sheet was loose and could easily be lost. This highlighted the need for a handheld patient record folder so that Mary could refer back to her results and the information can be shared easily at a GP or hospital appointment. It was felt that the communication between the GP and the hospital could be improved. At the end of the consultation, goals were set and a date for these to be reviewed.



There were more leaflets and posters in the consultation room, one advertising the Diabetes UK Islington Voluntary Group Meetings. Again, the range of leaflets and posters on display could be reviewed to provide a better picture of what is available for patients in the area.

The physical environment of the room was conducive to an open consultation. The layout was informal with low chairs and tables and no desk in-between the clinician and patient. The atmosphere created by the environment was non-clinical, friendly and open.

10.50 Mary had her blood sample taken, and the Diabetes Specialist Nurse will call Mary with the results.



11.15am Mary being taken home again by ambulance



What are two implicit or explicit messages that patients receive when they come to the clinic that encourage Co-creation?

- The ethos was that the patient was in control of her own diabetes but she had the full support of the Diabetes Specialist Nurse at the Whittington to help her set goals and review them.
- Mary was given the tools to continue to measure her own blood sugar levels and blood pressure at home and encouraged to review her food intake to review the impact this has on these levels.

What are two implicit or explicit messages that patients receive when they come to the clinic that act as barriers to Co-creation?

- There were not enough notices or materials on view to promote self-management and its benefits. The process for putting up information is bureaucratic and should be reviewed.
- Lack of a generic pack to monitor and keep records each time the patient goes to a GP or hospital appointment.

This was one snapshot of a patient pathway and we understand that a patient may have a completely different experience at another consultation or journey at the hospital.