

Service innovation to help people live well with diabetes and reduce sight loss

Diabetic eye disease is still one of the leading causes of certifiable sight loss amongst the working age population in the UK. More than 3.2 million people in England are living with diabetes and this is likely to increase to just under 10% of the population by 2030.

Some populations are more at risk of diabetes than others, for example people living in socio-economic deprivation.

RNIB with Action for Blind People working in partnership with the Pakistani community and health services in Bradford used a co-production approach to develop and pilot a suit of interventions to increase access to eye care services and improve self management for people living with diabetes.

Interventions

1. Just over 400 people of Pakistani heritage diagnosed with diabetes aged 40 to 65 received a 'Living Well with Diabetes' self management folder.
2. Health professionals and community activists were encouraged to give consistent messages about living well with diabetes.
3. A traditional Sufi story 'Tether my Camel' drawing on the Islamic faith of the community, was used as a focus for discussion to challenge a sense of fatalism and encourage people to take responsibility for their health.
4. Text appointment reminder sent by the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening (DRS) service.
5. A bilingual worker phoning people to remind them of their appointment in the diabetic retinopathy outpatient clinics.



3.2 million people in England are living with diabetes



People of South Asian ethnicity are up to six times more likely to develop diabetes compared to the general population

Key findings

- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine undertook the process, outcome and economic evaluation.
- Attendance at Diabetic Retinopathy Screening (DRS) increased by 15% amongst the target population who received all the interventions compared to other group that just received text reminder. Overall attendance at DRS increased by 10%.
- Non attendance (DNA) at Diabetic Retinopathy outpatient clinics fell by 4% amongst the target population.
- Exposure to information about eye health and diabetes increased by 9%.
- There was a 15% increase in understanding of the need to attend both eye examinations and DRS.
- A 23% increase in understanding about the need to check blood sugars and attend appointments to reduce the risk of complications.
- The 'Living Well with Diabetes' intervention to improve self management was popular with GP practices. Three local Clinical Commissioning Groups extended funding for the work to reach a further 12,000 patients.

RNIB and Action for Blind People are now rolling out the work with GP Practices in Salford, Liverpool and Leeds with the support of Department of Health funding.

“We’ve found a way of implementing self care that actually makes sense to those people who have the condition”

Greg Fell, Bradford Consultant in Public Health

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Publisher: RNIB

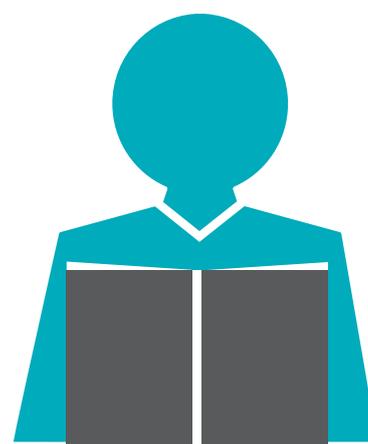
Year of publication: 2015

Full research brief:

rnib.org.uk/living-well-with-diabetes



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