



Diabetes Care For You

Overview

The Diabetes Care For You service within Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust needed to support its patients with type 1 diabetes and ensure they had the necessary information and resources if they became unwell during the pandemic. The team worked to optimise the way the service targeted those patients who are most at need.

What the organisation faced

The Diabetes Care For You service within Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust manages adult patients with type 1 diabetes. When the pandemic hit, the team was aware of the increased risk to their patients due to both the risk of contracting COVID-19, and the risk of poorer outcomes if contracted. Evidence suggests that 30 per cent of deaths due to COVID-19 have been patients with diabetes.

What the organisation did

The team used its data dashboards to identify the current active patient caseload and sent a sick day rules leaflet to every patient with type 1 diabetes. This leaflet provided advice to patients on what to do if they became unwell, lists of food alternatives, advice about when to check ketones (blood or urine), and what to do with that information.

The team sent patients a letter to confirm if they had a meter for measuring blood or urine ketones. If the patient did not have one, they were prescribed and sent one. The team pre-empted this need and linked with companies to supply additional meters.

To ensure the limited supply of meters was prioritised according to need, the team risk-stratified the type 1 diabetes caseload using the data dashboard and prioritised patients who had not completed structured education sessions, because they were less likely to have had sick day rules information. The team started with patients aged 60 and over, then worked down in 10-year blocks. They repeated the process for those who had attended structured education sessions, to ensure parity of information.



Results

The data dashboards enabled better data recording regarding the dissemination of the sick day rules, and ketone meter supply, with dedicated healthcare assistant resource to support this and code in the SystmOne records.

This innovation has led to an increase in the provision of leaflets on sick day rules, from 49 per cent before the pandemic to 88 per cent currently.

The provision of meters for measuring ketones has also increased, from 44 per cent before the pandemic, to 61 per cent during it.

Other benefits:

- Better data capture and coding in SystmOne records, to support improved dashboard reporting.
- Awareness among patients that the service was still open for support during the pandemic.
- Quick support from the service partner who is responsible for all the business intelligence elements regarding data dashboard updates.

What's needed to sustain the innovation

- Ongoing service capacity to support this approach as business as usual.
- Continued business intelligence support from the service partner, including their ability to provide rapid and changing data dashboard reporting.
- Sufficient staffing resources and access to blood ketone meters if patients needed them.

Contact

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