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Group Clinic Case Study

Supporting people to manage hypertension in primary care



"Patients felt it was interesting and good to hear about other patients and their experiences and conditions"

Group Clinic Facilitator

The Challenge

Our routine care at Balance Street for people with hypertension is a lengthy process, involving submission of blood pressure readings and medication reviews. We felt we could streamline this process, improving efficiency for the practice and health outcomes for patients. As this was our first group clinic, we decided to hold the session face to face. We also wanted to understand how group clinics work, build more confidence and develop the skills of our clinicians and facilitators to support spread of this model to other staff members.

Our Group Clinic Intervention Design

We recruited patients that had recently submitted home blood pressure readings, all within a similar range, who would require a review with the Medicines Management team. We held our group clinic for 1 hour between 1pm and 2pm. 7 patients attended with our facilitator Kerry and clinician Isaam. During the group clinic, we allowed each patient 5 minutes for a 1:1 discussion for anything that was specific to them e.g. any medications that they were already taking and any concerns. The consent process felt very easy and smooth with all information sent to the patient before the group clinic. They were provided with a link to further information on our website. We also included an educational section to advise on how to take blood pressure at home. Feedback suggested this part was highly valued.

Results and Topic Board

Topics we highlight include: Home BP Monitoring, Alcohol, Diet, Smoking, Exercise, Concerns about medication side effects

Results board includes: Blood Pressure, EGFR, Number of Prescriptions and BMI



What Changed & Improved?

Efficiency and access

- Reduction in clinical time: standard care telephone calls take 15 minutes per patient. The group clinic allowed 7 patients in 60 minutes.
- A big benefit is the time the group clinic creates for teaching participants the correct way to take blood pressure, encouraging use of the NHS APP and for our care co-ordinator (who facilitates) to provide information about community groups to help with lifestyle change. It is impossible to include all this highly valued advice in standard 15-minute telephone reviews.
- Zero DNAs – a significant difference!

Quality of care

- Patients supported one another to understand blood pressure and what it means.
- Patients heard about lifestyle changes from others which increased overall motivation of the group to reduce their high blood pressure.
- Group discussions during 1:1s helped everyone to see the benefits of maintaining their blood pressure in line with recommended targets.
- Moving forward we will include more clinical biometrics on our results boards.

Psycho-social impact

- Peer support to understand the benefits of reducing blood pressure.
- Community connections that would not have happened without the group clinic.
- People felt validated. They weren't the only one, struggling to manage BP.

Experience of Care

- The team recognised the benefits and patients fed back that they would recommend group clinics to others. They valued having more time and feeling less rushed.
- The CAR PARK was invaluable to manage conversations when they were going off track.

"We look forward to organising clinics around other topics including Pain Management, Diabetes and Asthma"

Dr Atherton, PCN clinical lead

