

GUYS AND ST THOMAS' TRUST (GSTT)



From left to right: Rebecca Strutton, Steven O'Grady-Walsh, Mariette Felix and Ana Lopes

Meet the team from Guys & St Thomas' Trust, South-East London. And learn how they're prototyping ideas that could help in increasing the uptake of diabetic eye screening at Tessa Jowell GP surgery by at least 15%.

“ A lot of our team and other eye screeners have had individual projects to try and improve our service uptake. We've each tried lots of different things over the years, but the Lab is quite good for us as it pulls us all together, and now we have more of a focus. ”

Many inequalities can contribute to non-attendance of eye-screening appointments, including age (older patients as well as working age), deprivation, language barriers, lack of understanding of importance or lack of availability and financial capacity to travel to multiple appointments.

Attendance at Tessa Jowell GP surgery was at 70.1%, which is below the national achievable standards of 85% attendance. Understanding the reasons why patients are not attending eye screening is difficult unless the patient provides information to the service provider, or this information is shared by their GP. How can we break this cycle of missed communication and ensure patients receive the care they need?

Here's where our team comes in.

Following feedback received from previous patients who stated they were struggling to attend multiple appointments due to the time commitment required, the Lab team have set to work producing a 'one-stop shop'. This solution consists of having all the required diabetes services available in one location, so instead of having multiple appointments, patients will only need to attend one.

Moving with great energy, the team has been taking the challenge in their stride- but it hasn't all been smooth sailing. An initial delay while waiting for approval from the GP surgery resulted in the process being stalled, highlighting the importance of being able to control as many factors as possible. Fortunately, in this case, they were able

to overcome this obstacle with perseverance, making multiple phone calls covering a span of months until the issue was resolved.

Having received approval from Tessa Jowell GP surgery, the team has been engaging with patients to test whether their proposed idea of a one-stop shop is appealing to them. They've done this by reaching out to the known non-attenders registered to the practice and connecting with other health service providers within the area to reach their patients too. If the patients don't find the one-stop-shop desirable, the team will have to tweak their idea until it is.

We're looking forward to hearing about how they get on, and will keep you all updated here and on Twitter (@DiabetesUKProf).