

IMPROVING TRANSITION TO ADULT DIABETES CARE IN NOTTINGHAM

A collaborative project between Nottingham University Hospitals Trust and Diabetes UK

About Us



A collaborative project between healthcare professionals working in diabetes at Nottingham University Hospitals Trust and Integrated Care Board (ICB), young people (YP) with people diabetes who fall under their care, and Diabetes UK.

The Challenge



In the East and Midlands, we knew changes were needed to improve transition and diabetes services for YP aged 10-25. YP often feel unheard, and they don't know where to go for more information and support. We want and need to provide a service that meets the real needs of YP at all stages, but especially during transition into adult diabetes care.

The Approach



Co-production and systems thinking

To address this challenge, we took part in 14 interactive workshops that brought together a diverse group of young people, HCPs, ICB members, youth workers, and other core staff. Multiple teams from Diabetes UK supported this project; Health Systems Change, Involvement, East & Midlands regional, and Together Type 1.

It was important for us to get the thoughts and perspectives of YP using the service and work collaboratively to generate ideas for improvement. We wanted as multi-disciplinary team as possible so that we could gain a broad perspective on the situation and have people spread throughout the system to better enable us to realise the change we wanted to see.

Our methods



Using a systems thinking approach we took the time to examine the challenge as completely and accurately as possible before acting, scrutinise assumptions, and embrace the lack of a perfect solution. We took a curious and compassionate approach to our investigations as we worked towards improving the experiences of YP. Working with YP, we developed our comprehension of the situation by:

- Creating a shared understanding by **mapping the journey of YP** from diagnosis to adult care and deciding on a shared goal.
- Conducting surveys to find out what YP and HCPs think about diabetes care and **test our assumptions**.
- Continuing to **encourage and capture input from HCPs and YP** in workshops.
- Ongoing thematic analysis to determine commonalities and patterns.
- **Analysing the data** from the emergency department – of 240 attendances 20 were aged 12-17 and 153 were 18-25.

Our Vision



Using the insights gathered we identified the most prominent issues, established the key shifts needed, and developed concepts for change. Considering these shifts, we distilled our findings to focus on developing:

A service where YP feel supported with access to tailored information and emotional and wellbeing services, where they feel comfortable, listened to, and have their needs met at all stages of their diabetes journey.

Insights



Key items from young people:

- Mental health affects diabetes management. Better guidance and access to support is needed.
- Clinic waiting rooms need to be more welcoming. More colour and posters that are YP friendly with relevant information.
- Diabetes can be really isolating – more fun social events and opportunities to join/create support groups.
- Information on topics relevant to each stage of life should be easy to find.

Key items from HCPs:

- Need more time, capacity and resource dedicated to young adult care.
- Need an appropriate skill mix for the transition process.
- Improved communication and relationships between services across the trust.

Prototyping



We worked with YP to co-design and deliver a fun social event aimed to gain the voices of more YP in a way that would be engaging and sustain their involvement.

We were delighted to welcome 6 young people with type 1 diabetes to an axe throwing event. Through open discussions and feedback activities we were able to deepen our understanding of YP experiences whilst providing them an opportunity to engage with each other in a fun and relaxed manner. We greatly benefitted from a diversity of facilitators including a youth worker, a paediatric diabetes nurse, an adult nurse, and a paediatric diabetes consultant.

This event further emphasised the need for us to improve the transition website, by making it more user friendly, with appropriate information, and in a mobile friendly format. We are continuing this development.

The Impact



Young people are now more actively engaged and meaningfully involved in the development and improvement of the service, providing vital and substantive feedback that was previously absent. The relationships and trust we've built with young people means that our co-designed interventions are more likely to work and lead to long-term, positive change.

We have developed strong relationships and improved alignment between the different professions that are working to deliver care for young people. This is crucial to making change successful and fostering a system that can continuously adapt to the needs of young people with diabetes.

Key Learnings



1. The tremendous value in meaningfully involving the YP people that experience the service and challenging assumptions.
2. Good relationships between young people and HCPs are fundamental to the care experiences of young people.
3. Change takes time, "it takes patience and perseverance towards a common goal."

What's Next?



We will be establishing a calendar of events to continue to involve YP in the development of the service. We will utilise Diabetes UK channels and other networks, and young leaders to promote and co-lead these events.

We will address inequities in care by expanding our engagement and gain input from YP who were underrepresented in ongoing activities.

To improve the clinic waiting areas for YP we are continuing to work with Diabetes UK to develop engaging posters targeted to YP. This will be a collaboration with YP where they will contribute to both content and design.

We are going to continue to nurture the relationships we have developed as a group and expand these.