

Key messages

- The purpose of the Self Care Forum is to promote self care and embed it into everyday life.
- Excellent clinical practice involves healthcare professionals encouraging people to look after their own health and that of their families. This is being supported in the training of GPs and nurses.
- Living healthy lives is an important component of self care, and prepares people to treat and manage commonly occurring and long term conditions.
- The NHS needs to be accessed effectively and efficiently so that it can provide quality care to all in the future.
- The Self Care Forum aims to promote self care by bringing together healthcare professionals and patient groups who are committed to encouraging and empowering people to self care and take care of themselves.
- Better education about how to look after symptoms that can be handled at home has the potential to save the NHS £2bn.

Secondary messages

- Healthcare professionals' time and expertise must be freed to look after people with more serious long term conditions.
- There is a responsible, collective voice calling for an end to the demand-led, rather than health needs culture seen in the use of the NHS.
- There is now an ethical imperative to drive efficiencies within the NHS.
- Self care is not about no care. It is about the NHS being able to provide care when people need it.
- GPs and nurses need to be encouraged to explain how people can take care of themselves, and consider providing support, information and education.