

REVIEW OF NATIONAL SELF CARE WEEK 14-20 NOVEMBER 2011

1. Introduction

Self Care Week 2011 took place between 14-20 November. The Week focused on “helping people to take care of themselves” by taking control of their own health and wellbeing. The key theme was how technology can support self care.

This year, the Department asked the Self Care Forum to co-ordinate arrangements, so that there was much wider buy-in from stakeholders.

There was a great deal of activity across the country led by local NHS organisations, healthcare professionals and the voluntary sector. Feedback has been very positive, with encouraging support from local and national organisations promoting the benefits of self care support and the health and well being services they offer.

This report celebrates some of the national and locally-led activity which took place to promote the campaign, an assessment of the success of the Week and a proposal for continuing to make Self Care Week a regular annual national event.

To compliment this report a Self Care Week presentation has been developed to capture the activity visually. A link to the full presentation will be made available on line shortly.

2. Background

The first national Self Care Week took place in 2009 which was a great success. There was a similar level of enthusiasm and activity for the campaign held in 2010.

Building on this momentum, we have been delighted by the level of activity across the country for Self Care Week 2011 involving people and organisations from all sectors.

3. What was the aim of Self Care Week 2011?

This year's event aimed to promote the shared responsibility everyone should have in looking after their health as well as to promote the information and support available to help people to do this. As people in NHS and social care organisations were eagerly awaiting the results of the Whole System Demonstrator programme, it was an opportunity to focus some of the key messages around how telehealth and telecare can support people to self care. It was also an opportunity for health and social care organisations - including the voluntary and private sector - to promote or launch self care initiatives to their local community/members to raise awareness of what they offer to support people to self care.

4. Role of Self Care Forum

At the inaugural meeting in May, Paul Burstow, Minister for Care Services charged the Forum with co-ordinating Self Care Week 2011.

The Forum has played an influential role in driving Self Care Week 2011 and maintaining momentum across the NHS, social care and key stakeholders in the self care arena. Through our wide membership and networks, we have provided a platform to disseminate Self Care Week material to help maximise the coverage. During the Week and post event, the Forum's website [www.selfcareforum.org] has provided a key source of information to the self care community to promote Self Care Week messaging, resources, and a channel for local evaluation.



The Forum is grateful to the DH for its support and commitment to help make this year's event as successful as previous years. The main thrust of DH support was to lead the workstream that developed a suite of promotional material to encourage as many organisations and stakeholders to run local activities/initiatives. Materials included the Self Care Week logo, banner, web button, web link, posters, suggested articles, case studies, and a suite of free public-facing DH leaflets which support the campaign messages. The materials were brought together in a Communication Information Pack to NHS, social care and voluntary sector organisations.

Stakeholders received regular information about the resources available for self Care Week through regular Self Care Week newsletters which were widely circulated through Forum members networks. The newsletters helped to keep the self care community up-to-date with latest developments, information and promotional material to help local people and organisations gear up to participate in the Week. The Pack was also posted on NHS Commslink and the DH website.

We worked with NHS Choices to promote the Week across their website through a Self Care Week Landing Page, as well as promoting the campaign in the Choices e-newsletter disseminated to around 130,000 subscribers. DH ran articles in all the DH bulletins (The Week, GP, CNO, AHP and Social Care) to ensure Self Care Week messaging reached as many parts of the NHS and social care workforce as possible.

Following the technology theme we used Facebook and Twitter on NHS Choices as a forum to promote the Week and share experiences of how technology can support people to self care, including use of mobile apps, equipment and online support groups, to support people to manage their own health and well being.

Whilst the Forum developed the campaign tools and resources to support communities maximise the impact of the Week, the campaign was about organisations developing their own approaches to promote self care initiatives to their local community and to raise awareness of the health and wellbeing services they offer to support people to self care.

5. National activities to promote the Week

There was a wide range of activity across the country during Self Care Week. Here is just a flavour of some of the activity at a national level (see Annex A for a more detailed list).

Self Care Week was launched by Paul Burstow, Minister for Care Services at the **PAGB Self Care Conference** on 8th November. He also spoke about self care at the **International Telecare and Telehealth Conference** on the 14-16th November, this was particularly opportune, given that theme this year was technology supporting self care.

Self Care Week immediately followed the National Pharmacy Association's (NPA) Ask Your Pharmacist Week (7-13 November). This was an ideal platform to raise awareness of Self Care Week and the contribution of pharmacy to supporting self care. As part of the NPA's communications, they agreed to disseminate information and resources about Self Care Week to both independent and multiple pharmacies, along with distributing a **dedicated Self Care Week pharmacy poster** to 4,500 independent pharmacies.

The Life Channel ran three short films just before and during the Week to raise awareness of the self care choices that are available to people with long term conditions. The Life Channel broadcasts content to over 2,200 GP surgeries and health centre waiting rooms, 1,600 schools/colleges and children's centres, as well as prison and probation offices. **Simon Burns**, Minister of State for Health, mentioned Life Channel in the context of Self Care Week and supporting self care and lifestyle choices at his keynote speech at the



London Health Conference on 15 November, so our messaging was heard by key leaders in the health and social care arena.

We ran a **two-part WebEX (17 November and 8 December) presentation** to help embed our messaging to front line staff and service managers who are involved in the LTC QIPP workstream. Dr Paul Stillman of the Forum talked through practical steps to embed self care and self management support into everyday practice in a practice.

At the **NHS Employers Annual Conference** held 15-16 November, self care information and resources were made available to support NHS managers look after their own health and wellbeing and that of their staff. NHS Employers promoted workforce information and resources on their exhibition stand, including a Self Care Week postcard signposting professionals to a suite of information factsheets for the workforce.

The New Statesman magazine mentioned Self Care Week in their 14 November "NHS issue" following a roundtable breakfast event in Westminster on Community Pharmacy in 21st Century Britain chaired by BBC health correspondent Branwen Jeffreys, on Monday 7th November.

Diabetes UK promoted Self Care Week as part of their World Diabetes Day (14 November). They made a call to action on individuals on the 15 measures of care, which outlined the minimum standards of care people with diabetes should receive including self care/ self management support.

6. Local Activities

A wide variety of NHS organisations including NHS trusts and PCTs ran their own local events, using the Self Care Week promotional material, and posted information and links to the NHS self care support information on their internal and public-facing websites.

Attached is a flavour of some of the key activities which took place. The attached Annex provides a more detailed list of the events we know took place.

NHS West Midlands supported Self Care Week through their **Self Care Bus** which toured around six towns in the West Midlands during the Week handing out public-facing information leaflets on Self Care for minor ailments, keeping warm, flu and the West Midlands care package. People from local healthcare organisations joined the bus to offer advice and information to the general public.

The **Expert Patients Programme** Community Interest Company (EPP CIC) used a number of events across the country to promote the Week, including promotion via radio interviews and speaking to patients groups at a local self care week event in Tameside about the work of the EPP, and raising the awareness of the campaign.

Patient group members visited the Princes Royal at Telford and the Royal Shrewsbury to launch the development of a **Directory of Self Help Groups for Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire** – an invaluable self management resource for people needing continuing support. On the launch day, **Shropshire Patients' Group** talked to patients in all clinics at both hospitals telling them about the new Directory and handing out business cards to raise awareness of the importance of self help support groups/networks across the locality.

Haughton Thornley Medical Centre who hosted a successful Self Care Day on 17 November. The events provided a great opportunity to talk to patients about improved



lifestyle choices for diabetes management, how the EPP could support patients, help for people with visual impairment, and talks by patients sharing their own experiences.

University Hospital of South Manchester who supported the Week through their “Me, My Health and I” Road show from 14-18 November. This event promoted self care and self management services across the city and engaged local people and healthcare providers across Manchester about the benefits of self management.

Oxley Health Centre in Dorset held a self care event on 18 November which included including free workshops (fitball, pilates, tai chi) and gave local communities the opportunity to have a body check as well as offering nutritional advice and other self care information.

NHS Dorset used the Week to launch their self management DVD which illustrated how self management techniques have supported people with long term conditions to better manage their condition.

Other activities included the **British Heart Foundation** who promoted the Week via their cardiac rehabilitation leaflet, and **NHS North West** linked it with their Winter and Choose Well campaign, which directs patients to the service best suited to their illness or condition, including self care support services, pharmacies or walk-in centres.

We are currently co-ordinating a wide-ranging Review of activities which will be published on both the DH and the Forum website shortly celebrating the activity which took place and the diversity of organisations who took part.

7. Outcomes of Self Care Week

Self Care Forum Website

There were nearly 1,000 visits to the Self Care Forum website. There were 246 visits to the Self Care Week page during the Week, representing 11.5% of the total number of visits to the Forum’s site. Of these visits 118 were new visits and 128 were returning visits. Monday and Tuesday of the Week saw the highest number of page views, and the average time spent on the Self Care Week page was 3 minutes 10 compared to 1 minute 40 on the rest of the site. This clearly demonstrates are messages were being heard.

Department of Health

Orders from the DH Distribution Centre show an excellent take up of leaflets to support the Week. During the Week 143,804 DH publications were ordered, (compared to 130,500 ordered last year which represents a 10% increase) including:

- 47000 Get Well Soon Without Antibiotics
- 45000 5 A Day what’s It All About Leaflet
- 14000 Appointments: Questions To Ask Leaflet
- 11000 Advice for Living Well With a LTC
- 10000 Care Planning Patient Leaflet
- 8000 The Pain Toolkit Booklet
- 3000 Does Your Son or Daughter Have a LTC
- 2500 Guide to Pharmacy Services – It’s Your Choice

The link was shared by 60 people on Facebook and 'liked' by 41. There were 23 comments on the two postings about Self Care Week. The posts on NHS Choices at facebook/nhshealthyiving and facebook/nhschoices reached 3,902 people.

Hits on the Self Care pages of NHS Choices (which is the link on the Self Care Week banner/logo and posters in the communications packs) increased three-fold during the Week with the Home Page receiving most visits.

9. Stakeholder Feedback

We asked our stakeholders to complete a small survey to evaluate local impact of the campaign. Of those stakeholders who completed the survey (the majority of whom were NHS organisations):

- 95% said they would support Self Care Week 2012
- 75% said they had a clear understanding of what their organisation was expected to do to take part in Self Care Week
- 73% said having earlier notification of the date for Self Care Week was helpful in planning their activity
- 71% used the key messages about the Week from the Communication Information Pack to support local activity
- 66% found the regular Self Care Forum newsletters helpful
- some people suggested we need *“to make Self Care Week more nationally recognised by running a national campaign so the general public are more aware for example like the FAST campaign”*.

10. Next Steps

Once again we have delivered a great deal during the Week which is testament to the enthusiasm and dedication of Forum champions, DH colleagues and NHS/external colleagues who have worked very hard to maintain momentum and make local events happen.

Feedback from our stakeholders tell us that there is clear support (and enthusiasm) to make Self Care Week an annual event to be held in November as it sits well with seasonal health messaging/initiatives on Winter Warmers, Sloppy Slippers and managing cold and flu symptoms.

On the back of Self Care Week 2011, and as part of our ongoing aim to promote the benefits of self care, we are planning to work with the NHS Confederation and DH to develop a dedicated self care publication. Initial thinking is to couch the narrative in the context of how technology can support self care (on the back of the Whole System Demonstrator findings).

The challenge now will be to go further than we have before, not only in providing relevant information, but in empowering and educating patients and professionals in promoting the benefits of self care.

We hope many more people will support us in 2012.

Self Care Forum
January 2012