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RCGP LAUNCHES E-LEARNING COURSE AT SELF-CARE CONFERENCE

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) has announced the launch of its e-learning self-care course at the twelfth PAGB Annual Self-Care Conference, held today in London. The course is designed to give health professionals the consultation skills to encourage and empower their patients to self-care, and is specifically focused on minor ailments.

Professor Nigel Sparrow, co-chair of the steering group that informed the course and chair of the Professional Development Board of the RCGP said: "As health professionals I believe it is our duty to provide education and support to our patients and the wider community to 'self-care'. The RCGP's new online course is aimed at facilitating this. It is important for both patients and GPs to improve shared decision making to increase patient confidence and develop more effective use of primary care".

The online course's launch at the jointly hosted RCGP, PAGB, Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) Self-Care Conference follows a year of development and testing after the initiative was first announced at last year's Expert Self Care Symposium. It has been developed by RCGP and funded by NHS North West, and is now available for health professionals to access via the RCGP website.

Susan Summers, assistant director of quality assurance and self-care at NHS North West Strategic Health Authority, said: "If we are to halt the rise and prevalence of long term conditions, focus on prevention and upstream activity, including minor ailments, is critical – self-care is absolutely the catalyst for this, and this is why NHS North West felt it so important to fund the RCGP's new online module. We are proud to have been involved and are sure the course will further the reach of self-care."

Anthony Chuter, chair of the RCGP's patient participation group said: "As someone who has learnt to self manage a long term condition with the help of my GP and consultants, I know just how much difference this could also make to others managing short term periods of illness. I am glad that health professionals are getting further support in encouraging patients like me to self-care."

Gopa Mitra, co-chair of the online course steering group and director of policy and public affairs at PAGB said: "We are doing this because our research over the last two decades shows that GPs, nurses and other health professionals have an enormous role to play in empowering patients to have the confidence to know when self-care is appropriate and when they need to seek medical help. I am delighted that the RCGP has enabled our common vision to become a reality and NHS Northwest has played such a valuable role in funding it."

Ends -

Notes to editors:

The twelfth annual self-care conference took place 8 November, RIBA, London, 9.30am – 4.20pm. For media enquiries and resources relating to the outputs of the conference please contact Victoria Mayman at victoria.mayman@salixconsulting.com or on 020 8675 4779.

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The course is free to all healthcare professionals who register on the RCGP Online Learning Environment: www.elearning.rcgp.org.uk

RCGP online course steering group comprises:

- Prof Nigel Sparrow: co-chair
- Gopa Mitra: co-chair

- Prof Mike Pringle
- Dr Pete Smith
- Anthony Chuter
- Dr Knut Schroeder
- Carol Basham
- Dr Beth McCarron-Nash
- Susan Summers
- Dr Dean Marshall
- Jane O'Brien
- Sara Richards

The RCGP also recently launched a tool to help GPs and their teams to enhance the care of patients with a long terms condition such as diabetes. [Care Planning – Improving the Lives of People with Long Term Conditions](#) focuses on people with long term physical health problems and provides guidance to help GPs and their teams better support such patients in gaining more control over their health and improving the quality of their lives.