



Self Care Week: Think Self Care for Life during every contact

Embargoed: 00.01am Monday 18 November 2019

The Self Care Forum is marking the start of Self Care Week 2019– theme ‘Think self care for life’ – with the launch of an easy to use e-learning package aimed at helping GPs, nurses, pharmacists and other health professionals incorporate self care messages in their consultations.

“Successful self care aware consultations”, developed in partnership with health professionals and patient representatives, was commissioned by NHS England to support its guidance on non-prescribing in primary care of items which can be obtained over the counter.¹

The e-learning package aims to equip healthcare professionals with the knowledge and skills to conduct “self care aware” consultations to support people to have the confidence to better look after their own health when it comes to self-treatable conditions.

Self Care Forum president, Dr Peter Smith, who has been conducting self care aware consultations for many years, believes self care is better care. “As a GP, I discovered over 30 years ago that people want to look after themselves as well as they can and want to be reassured they are getting it right.

“By including self care messages in as many contacts as possible we can help them achieve this. And, whilst there’s lots of pressure on all our time, this online course can help GPs incorporate self care within the confines of a 10 minute consultation.”

“This course is also perfect for nurses” says the RCN’s Helen Donovan, the Self Care Forum’s chair. “Practice nurses have always been particularly strong champions of self care and looking at the holistic needs of the people they see. This resource is ideal for experienced nurses and newly qualified, to support them to help patients with self care and make every contact count - it’s about helping people to help themselves which is the best philosophy for any service user interaction.”

GP and Chief Executive of the Self Care Forum Dr Knut Schroeder said "This new e-learning resource will be a welcome tool for general practice teams, enabling them to provide information and support relating to self care more effectively. And this will be a good thing because better self care not only empowers patients to be more in control of their health but also benefits the NHS by helping people choose services wisely."

The e-learning course is also ideal for community pharmacists according to Professor Rob Darracott, Self Care Forum Trustee. "Community pharmacists are health experts on the high street and are well placed to deliver self care advice, while signposting people to the most appropriate care for their health needs, whether this is self care or an NHS service. Ensuring people can safely look after their own health is important. This programme makes it clear that self care is not 'no care', it's care with the support people need to look after themselves and their families."

"Successful self care aware consultations", a course in four short modules, can be accessed free of charge on the *E-Learning for Life* platform.

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Notes to editors:

- National Self Care Week runs from 18 to 24 November. This year's theme is 'Think Self Care for Life'.
- Images for Self Care Week are available [here](#) on the Self Care Forum website.
- The Self Care Forum is an independent charity which aims to further the reach of self care and embed it in everyday life.
- [Successful self care aware consultations](#) was developed in partnership with health professionals (pharmacists, doctors, nurses) and patient representatives and commissioned by NHS England to support it's 'Guidance on conditions for which OTC items should not routinely be prescribed in Primary Care'.

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ⁱ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines/conditions-for-which-over-the-counter-items-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed/>