

Self Care Forum Coronavirus Innovations Award

Healthy Lifestyle Patient Education

Below are details of the winning entry for the 2020 Self Care Coronavirus Innovation Awards. The Self Care Forum is keen to spread ideas of best practice and we hope this will be helpful in providing tips to implement self care strategies that will benefit people in your community.

Title and contact details

Title of Initiative: Healthy Lifestyle Patient Education
Name of person/team/individual being nominated: Jess Keeley & Lesley Simpson/LTC Team, Bucks CCG
Contact name for entry: Jess Keeley
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Date submitted: 30/07/20

Problem(s) and how you tackled them

What is the context of this study?

(e.g. general practice, community care, pharmacy, care home, employment)

What was the problem you were trying to tackle? (max 200 words)

Supporting Vulnerable Patients to Self-Care

Buckinghamshire CCG's Long Term Conditions, Prevention and Self-Supported team had recently created a healthy lifestyle face-to-face programme to target vulnerable individuals in the population. This was due to be piloted in March of this year but was put on hold due to the unprecedented step taken by the Government to limit the spread of Covid-19 by imposing lockdown on 23rd March.

In Buckinghamshire, there are approximately 14,000 residents who are shielding in the current pandemic, not to mention the thousands of people who have also been self-isolating during this time. The team decided to explore how the material created could be delivered virtually to reach these vulnerable individuals and support the self-management of their condition(s) whilst in lockdown. Aside from the benefit of positive lifestyle information it was also felt that the sessions could also address the social isolation that is a common adjunct when having to seclude from others.

Please give a brief description of your self care innovation

Healthy Lifestyle Sessions

There are three interactive lifestyle sessions available for those who are shielding and/or self-isolating, each of the sessions are designed to encourage individuals to set achievable goals to support them to make healthy lifestyle choices. The sessions contain key, evidence-based messages to help people improve their self-care, which is extremely important during the time of this current pandemic.

The topics covered are managing anxiety and stress, eating for health, and the importance of physical activity. All of which impact one another and can single handedly dictate how well one's physical and mental health and wellbeing might be. Given the higher levels of stress, anxiety and worry felt at this time; these sessions provided an opportunity to highlight just how important making or maintaining a healthy lifestyle really is. To compliment the content within the sessions, there is a section dedicated to simple movement to help safely mobilise and move the body followed by a guided relaxation to allow those attending to let their minds have a welcome break too.

Use of the chat function via Zoom enables interaction within the sessions so patients can ask questions, share, comment and discuss the messages given.

Recorded sessions have been uploaded to the CCG website to further enable individuals to access at a time that suits them or to refresh their learning from a live session.

What challenges or barriers were you faced with?

The main challenge to overcome was how to get the information about the sessions to the people who could benefit and in time to ensure the content was appropriate when they were still self-isolating/shielding. Working collaboratively with GP practices invites to the sessions were sent via email from individual practices to shielded patients and those identified by their practice that would find them beneficial. An unexpected consequence of working this way with practices was that this approach highlighted the need for them to improve their contact records with an up-to-date email address for their patients.

Impact and outcomes

Who benefited from this initiative?

Shielded and Self-Isolating

The sessions were aimed at supporting vulnerable individuals whether shielded or self-isolating. Those that have attended the live sessions have reported that they have found them beneficial in a variety of ways. Whether through learning something new, to being reminded of what is important in the ever-growing field of conflicting advice surrounding healthy lifestyles, to finding the sessions encouraging and feeling motivated to make changes and set goals. GP practices have also found this initiative has helped them to enhance the amount of up-to-date email contacts within their systems and to gauge just how virtual education sessions are received by their patients. At a time when primary care networks are looking at how to enhance care for their patient population this initiative demonstrates how patients can be supported remotely to better self-care which has the potential to limit or reduce further health complications.

Were there benefits to you, your colleagues, your organisation or to a wider area such as the NHS? If so, what were they?

As lockdown resulted in all face-to-face patient programmes being put on hold, the training team within the CCG have been able to continue delivering important lifestyle messages via the sessions. As part of a project that was being developed before lockdown, our focus is improving patient's self-care and health management through delivering healthy lifestyle education sessions. At the start of the pandemic we initially felt frustrated that our hard work to deliver the sessions could be thwarted, however in adapting to the situation and delivering the sessions online it has enabled us to successfully explore and use other means to continue supporting our most vulnerable residents.

Patients continue to need information and support to enhance their lifestyle choices, whether in a pandemic or not, so this initiative has proven that online sessions are valuable and will impact and inform on the way we offer training in the future.

Individuals that can better and more confidently care for, and self-manage their own health and long term condition are more likely to require less GP practice appointments, referral to secondary care and unplanned hospital admissions by reducing or delaying associated complications.

Evidence

If possible, please quantify potential benefits

Recent studies have indicated that those with an underlying health condition such as respiratory disease diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease are at a higher risk of contracting Covid-19 and suffering severe symptoms and mortality as a result. As many of the shielded and self-isolating have a long term condition the aim of the sessions are to enable individuals to effectively self-manage their condition better at this time. This is still a piece of work ongoing within the CCG, therefore we are only able to provide data of the numbers that have completed the sessions online and the viewing figures as of time of submission.

Session	Live sessions online	Recorded videos accessed online
Stress & Anxiety	24	49
Eating for Health	28	41
Importance of Physical Activity	25	29
Simple movement		22
Relaxation		18

The Long Term Plan (NHS, 2019) sets out the ambition of the NHS to drive ‘choice and control throughout our daily lives...technology is continually opening up new possibilities for prevention, care and treatment’. Furthermore Public Health Minister Seema Kennedy reported that ‘Through our Long Term Plan for the NHS we want to do more to empower people with easy-to-use digital tools and information to take care of their own health’ (2019). As the country moves into the recovery phase and evidence builds that underlying health conditions, ethnic background, age and obesity are risk factors which make people vulnerable to Covid-19 we are now actively risk stratifying our population to offer the sessions to a wider audience.

Participant Feedback

"The course was really good and presented very well in a positive informal way. I think it will be useful for many people, in particular (at this time) the session on stress.

"I found the Eating Well and Physical Activity seminars really interesting and extremely useful. They consisted of simple, practical, easy-to-follow points and tips. Added to that were real life, realistic examples to make them relevant to my life ... all things that I could take away the next day to try out."

"I thought it was pitched at the right level and clear on expectations and potential referrals for specifics."

"I really enjoyed the sessions, not only have I learnt lots but it felt as though you have all been in my living room for the last hour."

"All of the presentations were amazing. You know all those things, but hearing it like that was very helpful. Lesley and Jess were amazing at explaining how everything effects on other things"

"The presentations were so informative and enjoyable and very interactive."

What was the cost of this initiative in terms of time, money, or other resources?

To deliver the sessions remotely did not require any additional cost, and is in fact a cost effective initiative as no travel or venue expenses are incurred. The time of the trainers to deliver the sessions has been absorbed as part of their normal working days due to face-to-face sessions being put on hold.

Do you have any images, materials or weblinks to supplement your application?

Please attach supporting information or include links if necessary

<https://www.buckinghamshireccg.nhs.uk/online-healthy-lifestyles-video-support-available-for-people-shielding-or-self-isolating/>

And, finally...

Are there any lessons you learned or top tips that you would like to share?

The importance of being flexible and adapting to the population needs and current circumstances has been a crucial element in the success of this initiative as was the speed at which we were able to change direction and implement it.

It is easy to make the assumption that certain cohorts of the population will not have the skills to access on-line platforms and therefore not able to participate. However we have been pleasantly surprised at how well a variety of age groups have adapted and successfully joined the live sessions.

Did you use any of the Self Care Forum or other organisation's resources?

No specific resources were used however the learning from this forum informed on the creation and development of the sessions.

Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award?

Buckinghamshire CCG has been adaptive and responsive to the needs of its vulnerable population during an unprecedented time, understanding the many challenges this would incur for them. We have provided free education, tackled social isolation, encouraged interaction and motivated individuals to make change that will not only benefit them in the short term but has the potential of enabling our residents to live life healthier for longer. Providing a remote option for the delivery of healthy lifestyle information which is accessible regardless of work patterns, caring responsibilities, mobility, socio-economic or geographical barriers is actively increasing health literacy across Buckinghamshire and promotes our prevention and self-supported care strategies.