

Self Care Forum Self Care Innovations Award 2023

Award Application Form and Eligibility

The Self Care Forum is inviting applications of good practise and innovations in self care, personalised care, and social prescribing that have made a difference to individuals, groups, or organisations.

Who can apply?

This invitation is open to everyone, whether you are an individual, a community champion, an employer, GP practice, Local Authority, school, college, business, or services organisation (public, private, or charitable). For a guide, see examples table below.

£500 bursary

The winner will receive a £500 bursary to spend on a self care related initiative and the top entries will be included on the Self Care Forum website to share best self care practise and excellence. The winners will be announced during the UK's National Self Care Week (13 – 19 November) as part of its launch and promotional activity.

Closing date for admissions: **31st July 2023.**

Examples of possible initiatives	If specific health-related conditions were targeted, they might include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2022's Self Care Week activities • Signposting to services • Protecting mental health and wellbeing • Promoting self care to the shielded population • Self care for the elderly or other specific groups • Self care introduced by employers • Local authority population or community initiatives • Pharmacy initiatives • GP initiatives • Self care education by schools, universities, or community groups such as Scouts, Guides etc • Empowering vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term conditions • Obesity • Diabetes • General health • Nutrition • Exercise • Mental Health • Self-treatable conditions/minor illness

Please use the form below to tell us about your self care initiative.

If you are typing directly into the form, do not worry if the box extends beyond the page – it will continue onto the next one.

Title and contact details.

Title of Initiative (please ensure this is a good description of your initiative in no more than 6 words)

Promoting Personalised Care Plans in Community Nursing

Name of Organisation and Region (please state context, ie general practice, community care etc)

Community Nursing, Southwest London – Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust (CLCH)

Name of person/team/individual being nominated

Indigo & Blue Community Nursing Teams

Contact name for entry

Gemma Allen, Clinical Quality Lead, Southwest Division, CLCH

Contact email for entry – gemma.allen8@nhs.net

Timeframe and dates of initiative

Indigo Team July 2022 – ongoing

Blue Team January 2023 – ongoing

Red & Green Teams – July 2023 – ongoing

Date of submission

28th July 2023

Problem(s) and how you tackled them.

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

The benefits of promoting independence for patients and empowering them to become experts in their own health are well documented. Patients are referred to the community nursing teams for support with a wide variety of healthcare related needs. During caseload reviews, it was recognised that there were some patients who may be able to manage their healthcare needs more independently with appropriate support and education.

On discussion with teams, we identified that some staff found it difficult to broach the concept of self-care with patients due to a number of factors, including

- Time – conscious of time and need to get to next patient in a timely manner so quicker to undertake the intervention, rather than explore options around self-care and independence
- Confidence – both in broaching the conversation and assessing the patient as safe to be discharged from the caseload if able to manage own healthcare needs.
- Patient Expectations – patients may have been informed by other services that the nurse would be visiting and this would be on-going so patients sometimes seemed surprised when the idea of self-care is discussed.

We also explored the option of shared care – empowering patients and their families/carers to become more independent in managing healthcare needs.

Please give a brief description of your self-care innovation (max 250 words)

The project aimed to increase the development and implementation of personalised care plans, to include self-care & shared care, in the community nursing caseload of teams based in the borough of Merton.

Patients were assessed for their suitability to undertake self-care or shared care with the community nursing team & provided with support to achieve this. An assessment template was developed to support staff to discuss the initiative and assess patients for suitability.

If a patient was identified as being suitable to undertake self-care to manage their health needs, a schedule was developed to provide support to the patient to achieve this. This included demonstrations, health education, supportive visits to supervise interventions and phone calls to check in when becoming independent.

Where a self-care plan was not possible, a shared care option could be explored, supporting the person and their family or carers to manage healthcare needs. A similar schedule of support would be implemented as for self care, including education, demonstrations and supervision.

All patients were given clear safety netting advice & guidance on red flags so that they knew when to escalate to the community nursing team or another appropriate healthcare professional for review. Patients were considered for the programme where there was a clear interest in self/shared care & assessed as being appropriate to undertake this.

Regular meetings were held with the nursing team to review progress, review feedback from staff & patients, and make changes based on learning, using a Plan/Do/Study/Act approach.

What challenges or barriers were you faced with and how did you solve the problems or overcome the barriers? (max 250 words)

There were some barriers faced during implementation of the project, including:

Staff confidence – some staff did not feel confident initiating conversations with people or their families/carers around self-care/shared care as they were worried about how people would react. Discussions about the best way to approach this were held at handovers so that senior staff could provide support with opening the conversation.

Assessing patients' ability to manage their own care interventions: Nurses were concerned about initiating self-care in case any harm came to the patient. We had discussions about this & the extensive range of assessment skills nurses use daily. To support assessment, a template was developed to ensure all aspects were explored, from dexterity to the ability to retain information, supporting nurses in their assessment. We ensured safety netting & how patients could access help if needed.

Patient expectations – to ensure patients understanding of the benefits of becoming independent in managing healthcare, we included self-care in the Community nursing leaflet, introduced the concept at the triage phonecall & first assessment

Time – Nurses recognised these discussions took time initially and it was an additional step in an already lengthy initial assessment. Additional time was allocated to first assessment so that nurses felt they had sufficient time to explore the concept.

Data collection – finding a method of collecting valuable data without adding to the workload for the team took a few attempts to get right. We managed to identify a code on the clinical system that supported with data collection.

Did you collaborate with other partners or organisations, if so, who were they?

Now that we have implemented the project in 2 teams within the Division, we are keen to extend to other community nursing teams across the Trust, as well as including partner organisations, such as GPs and acute hospital Trusts. Where care agencies provided carers to patients involved in shared care, they were involved in developing the shared care plans to ensure everyone was providing the best care for the patient, with their input. We are in the process of developing a e-learning video to share our project and learning which could be shared externally.

Impact and outcomes

Who was the initiative directed at and what were the benefits to the targeted group or individuals? (max 250 words)

The initiative was directed at the community nursing caseload for 2 teams working in Southwest London. Initially, Indigo team reviewed all patients on the caseload & assessed suitability for self-care or shared care plans to be implemented. Care plans were developed in partnership with the patient & their carers/families. As the project progressed, only those new to the caseload were assessed so time commitment reduced. The project was extended to include Blue team, implementing the learning from the initial project with Indigo.

The aim was to empower patients to become experts in their own health, understanding their healthcare needs & diagnoses so they can better manage wellbeing. Although health education & promotion of independence is a normal part of nursing assessment, due to time pressures, it was recognised that this was not always a priority. One benefit is that patients can make more informed decisions about lifestyle choices that impact on health, for example, diabetic patients managing diet & insulin. It also meant that patients & carers became more aware of the signs to look for that health may be deteriorating, actions they could take & when to seek further advice. It offered flexibility to the patient and nursing team. For example, if a patient was being seen for woundcare but their dressing came off when the nurse was not due to visit, the patient or their carer/family could manage the wound & apply a suitable dressing until the nurse could review, lessening the chance of infection or deterioration.

Were there further benefits to you, your colleagues, your organisation or to a wider area such as the NHS? If so, what were they? (e.g improved job satisfaction, smoother running of facility, happier service users, better use of scarce resources, cost saving)

By enabling the patient and their carer/family to manage their own healthcare needs, there was more flexibility for patients. Where carers/family support with healthcare management, this provided more flexibility so that they could manage the health need in line with their own schedule. It also meant that the nurses, who have finite resources to manage the caseload of patients, could re-direct their care to patients who were unable to manage their own healthcare needs. Patient feedback on the initiative was positive and patients appreciated the time the nurses took to educate them in managing their health, as well as the flexibility this offered, whilst knowing support was at the end of the phone if ever needed.

Evidence

Please quantify the benefits of your initiative. (e.g. cost improvement, numbers of people helped, time saved)

From the 1st July 2022 to 30th November 2022, Indigo team had self-care and shared care discussions with 121 patients currently on or admitted to the caseload. This resulted in 44 shared care plans being initiated and 6 self care plans initiated where patients became independent in managing their health needs.

From January to June 2023, Blue team had self-care or shared care conversations with 69 patients on the caseload. Of these, 8 patients were initiated with a self-care plan and 18 with shared care plans. With the Blue team, we attempted to gain data on the specific number of visits that were reduced and therefore allocated to other patients on the caseload.

Some examples include a patient referred for twice daily insulin administration. Through education, demonstrations and supervision, this patient was able to start independently managing their blood glucose monitoring and insulin administration, initially reducing nurse visits and then providing only supportive phone calls to make sure the patient was managing his health appropriately. These visits could then be allocated to other patients referred to the caseload. Another patient who was seen 3 x per week for wound care was shown how to change the dressing with carer support, reducing nurses visits to once weekly with the carer supporting for the other 2 dressing changes.

It is hard to quantify how many visits could be re-allocated from the project as it is difficult to get accurate data from the clinical system and we are looking at new ways to collect this when we take the initiative to Red & Green team.

Do you have formal or anecdotal evidence of success? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, informal feedback?)

Below is some staff feedback on the project:

For me, being part for the self/personalize project was one of the best highlights of my nursing career. I was able to lead, facilitate, teach and equip patient to be confident/competent/empowered to manage their own care which was amazing.

Also, witnessing the trust that the patient/carer bestows on us in communicating their need/updating us of their care was insightful.

Furthermore, this project made a significant impact on the reduction of the caseload and prevented unnecessary referral through triaging. The staff were well equipped of their knowledge and skill to be able to offer the up-to-date information/advice to promote their health.

This project empowered me to uptake the QI coaching training and I am now a qualify QI coach. The success of this project has empowered me to uptake another project (identifying lower leg wound) – Team Lead, Indigo Team

In the beginning it was challenging for me and staff as patients are used to NHS providing all care, however, the triage process breaks the ice and on the actual assessment, patient and family are receptive.

These are some of the benefits I observed in this project.

- For some patients and families, it improved/reduced their dependency on health care especially when they had to wait for staff or received a cancellation call due to staff capacity.
- Learnt to manage their care with support of nurses. Teaching patient increases awareness of numerous health issues and how to be dealt with because families /patients would ask challenging questions.

- It increased patient flexibility especially those on x2 daily visits.
- It improved staff morale and confidence at work.

Team Lead, Blue Team.

What was the cost of this initiative in terms of time, money, and/or other resources? Please be as specific as you can

There was little cost in terms of additional resources. Myself and the Quality Improvement Facilitator met regularly with teams to support with the project and manage the data so that more pressure was not put on the clinical team.

We are awaiting quotes for the e-learning package but this will allow the project to be shared more widely across other teams in the Trust and externally – this will incur a cost but this is yet to be confirmed.

And, finally...

Are there any lessons you learned or top tips that you would like to share? (max 200 words)

There were lessons learned throughout the project.

The key to success was to introduce it early in the person's time on the community nursing caseload. Where it was discussed at the initial triage phone call and again at initial assessment, patients and their families/carers were much more receptive to the idea. This was harder with patients who had been on the caseload for some time, but with clear explanation of benefits in becoming an expert in their own healthcare, positive outcomes were seen.

Using the Plan/Do/Study/Act methodology, we could learn from our actions and implement new ways of working or supporting the team to improve the outcomes for patients as described in previous sections. The creation of a template to support discussions gave staff the confidence to proceed with the project. As confidence grew, staff became less reliant on the template, but it provided a comprehensive checklist of the factors to consider when assessing suitability to self-care.

Ultimately, patients felt safe to undertake their own care where possible due to the extensive assessment, education and support provided, whilst understanding there was always a way to access the community nursing team or other relevant healthcare professional should the need arise.

Did you use any of the Self Care Forum's resources? If so, please specify.

We used the general advice given on the self-care forum website and the benefits described to patients in understanding their own health needs and managing their own healthcare where appropriate.

Please provide the social media addresses of all those who were involved in the initiative.

Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award? (Max 100 words)

This project had many positive outcomes, including:

- Benefits to patients and carers/families becoming experts in managing their health conditions
- More flexibility for patients/carers/families when on the community nursing caseload.
- Improved staff morale as demonstrated by the staff feedback above

- Appropriate re-allocation of resources to those who cannot manage own healthcare needs

The community nursing teams are very stretched but were willing to implement this programme as they could see the benefits for individual patients and the wider caseload. They worked hard to learn as they went and implement changes as required. This will now be shared more widely with other teams.

Do you have an image, materials or weblinks to supplement your application? Please supply no more than 2 images which may also be used to promote your application if successful. Ensure images are square (ie height/width dimensions are the same).

Your application may be chosen to be uploaded to the “best practise” page of the Self Care Forum website to share self care excellence so that others might use the learnings in your application. We will also include your email address so that people may get in touch with you. If you would prefer that your application and/or email address was NOT chosen then please make it clear in the box provided below.

We look forward to receiving your application. Please email your completed form to:

selfcare@selfcareforum.org

About the Self Care Forum

The Self Care Forum supports organisations in helping their communities and service users better understand how to self care. It is the leading independent provider of best practice around self care and the ‘go-to’ place for top quality resources, current opinion, and self care interventions in the UK.

It is a charity and aims to improve public health by promoting self care at national policy level. It creates resources, runs the UK-wide National Self Care Week, and supports robust research evidence.

For more information about the Self Care Forum please go to the website. www.selfcareforum.org.