

# Top tips for improving diabetes care

Specialist diabetes nurses



## Service development

- Undertake an 'access to care' audit for your service like the one in this report, and create a plan to improve accessibility of your service.
- Record (and code) housing status in hospital core information (try to enable this, if this is not currently possible).
- Make contact with and visit other specialist diabetes nurses undertaking outreach work to gain tips for your own work.

## Patient assessment

- Ask about and record information about housing circumstances and access to food during assessments – e.g. kitchen facilities, food and medication storage, access to free food provision etc.
- Ask about storage of medication.

## Patient management

- Brush up on Type 3c diabetes.
- Consider whether there is enough use of pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy – this could be a good Quality Improvement Project in multiple areas.
- Offer use of CGM monitoring technology wherever possible.
- Use longer acting insulins and work with higher HbA1c levels for people with more complex lives.
- With patient consent, include a patient's support worker in their care.



- Proactively offer referral to healthy eating / cooking skills groups for people experiencing homelessness if these are available.
- Stock cooking guides that are relevant to people with limited access to a kitchen.
- Proactively offer referral to dietician support.
- Screen for mental health difficulties and diabetes distress, and proactively refer to Psychologists / mental health support. Consider overdose risks and eating disorder risks within screening.
- Take time to educate patients about diabetes, the treatment of diabetes, healthy eating, eye health and foot care.
- Stock easy read materials regarding diabetes, the treatment of diabetes, and healthy eating, and know where to access information in other languages.

## Linking in with homelessness services

- Make contact with your local community inclusion health service. If you do not know who there are many are listed [here](#). Visit them if possible. Investigate whether outreach to particular populations could be useful and possible.
- Make contact with any homeless day centres and hostels you have in your area. If you do not know who they are try a postcode search on '[Find a Service](#)' on the Homeless Link website. Ask whether they need any training or support. Consider building relationships at these sites by training diabetes champions. In exchange ask them to train you regarding homelessness issues in your area.

## Training & other links

- Undertake [NHS trauma informed care](#) training.
- Undertake [Language Matters Diabetes](#) training.
- Link in with your local addictions team / undertake training in this area.
- Link in with your hospital based homeless team if you have one locally e.g. those supported by the [Pathway Partnership Programme](#).