

Healthy Ideas

Building confidence for health

How to take control of your health and improve your community's health

There are many ways in which people can be more involved in looking after their own health and that of people they know.

Likewise in those cases where the health service is working less well, there is often something that you can do to help improve the situation.

This short leaflet sets out different tried and tested solutions for taking care of yourself and improving your community's health, using examples which have been put into practice in other parts of the country.

We suggest questions that you should be asking your local GP and hospital - the NHS is here to serve you!

Self-care in the community

Minor ailments

Q: Are you prepared for a minor ailment?
(e.g. Park Community Practice, Halifax)

Many minor ailments can be dealt with without the need for a trip to the doctor.

For example you don't need a prescription for many aches or colds, but simply need over-the counter medicine to relieve symptoms and time to recover.

Everyone should have a home medicine cabinet and suggestions for what to keep in it to treat yourself are listed opposite.

N.B. Keep medicines in date, follow instructions and never take tablets that were prescribed to someone else.

Pharmacy

If you would like some quick advice about your health, try asking at your local pharmacy. Pharmacists can provide advice about many common conditions, or may refer you to your GP for a more complex condition.

Paracetamol, ibuprofen & aspirin (children under 16 and people with asthma should not take aspirin)

Mild laxatives

Anti-diarrhoea medicines

Rehydration mixture

Indigestion remedy (for example, antacids)

Travel sickness tablets

Sunscreen - SPF15 or higher

Sunburn treatment (for example, calamine)

Tweezers and sharp scissors

A thermometer

A selection of plasters, non absorbent cotton wool, elastic bandages and dressings

Shared responsibility at the GP Surgery

Encouraging shared responsibility between GP and patient

(e.g. *The Bromley by Bow Centre*)

- A friendly reception makes patients feel welcome.
- The doctors go out into the waiting room to fetch patients in, rather than using a loudspeaker.
- No ties are worn by doctors and first names are used.
- The consulting room is designed so that there is a shared responsibility for treatment, with the patient sat next to the GP in front of the computer, rather than across a desk.

Q: Does your GP do this?

Patient participation

(e.g. *The Bromley by Bow Centre*)

Everyone can be expert patients, including children

- Bromley By Bow run 10 week art course for children.
- One example produced a large sculpture of the internal airways of the lung.
- Children learn to understand their own condition.

Q: What is your local NHS doing to promote health education?

(e.g. *Haughton Thornley Medical Centre*)

The Patient Participation Group represent the Patient 'voice' to the Practice

- They put on events about how to self-care during self-care week.
- They organise talks about specific conditions.
- Emails were sent out to patients reminding them of the health benefits of walking in walk-to-school week.

Q: Does your GP have a patient participation group?

Patient access to the full electronic health record

(e.g. *Haughton Thornley Medical Centre*)

Patients are able to see the same electronic health record as their doctor uses. This shows previous treatments, providers available, and the Map of Medicine showing the best way to manage their condition.

- The shared record supports a 'partnership of trust'
- Patients can use their access to the record to see test results as soon as they are available to the GP, without having to come to the surgery.
- Currently 11% of the patients in the practice have access to their records.

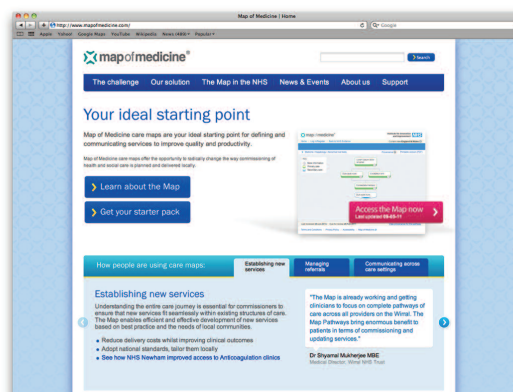
The practice website, also provides trusted links to information about health conditions, and links to talks and presentations that have been given.

Q: Is your practice able to share your record with you?

Map of Medicine

(e.g. *Haughton Thornley Medical Centre*)

The Map of Medicine gives power to patients and carers. This resource can be used to see the recommended treatment pathway for your condition and check whether the care you are offered matches this recommendation. <http://www.mapofmedicine.com/>



Improving the hospital experience

Kissing it Better

“Simple ideas that make the world of difference.”
<http://www.kissingitbetter.co.uk/>

Kissing it Better collect examples of simple ideas that can help patients have a better experience – often around practical issues such as appetizing food, improving comfort and surroundings or better communication.

Many of these ideas have been tried by patients themselves. Suggestions are added to the website and then are easily shared and can be reused by patients, carers and health professionals.

Modern Housekeepers

(e.g. Derby Hospitals)

Modern Housekeepers support the nursing staff by focusing on those areas of work, which do not come under other roles but are essential for the care of patients.

They provide an essential link between nursing and facilities, always being approachable and accommodating, undertaking the little tasks for the patients that mean so much, further enhancing the patient's experience.

Additional food options

(e.g. Royal Brompton Hospital)

Steve Barton is a 'modern matron' on Foulis Ward at the Royal Brompton Hospital. One of his many simple initiatives is a ring binder full of take-away menus. This can be used by patients who often long for a change from hospital food.

Listening to patient feedback

(e.g. Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust)

Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust runs regular Ward Matron Drop-in sessions for patients and their relatives to give feedback. At these sessions, the ward matrons:

- Listen to issues and concerns
- Take action quickly

Patients and relatives are alerted to this service via invitations and posters which are prominently displayed on ward and department doors. The aim of the service is to increase the patients' and relatives' confidence in the hospital's care.

“When you hear about how other hospitals have responded to patients' ideas to improve services it gives you more confidence to ask your local hospital to meet that standard.”

Yasmin Qureshi MP

“The idea of self-care ties in closely with the idea of the Big Society. Each person needs to play their own part, looking after their own health to allow better outcomes for all.”

Lord Wei

“I believe that if we want people to be active partners in all aspects of self care, we need to ensure that they have access to information, education and support to help them do that with confidence.”

**Paul Burstow MP,
Health Minister**

Improving the hospital experience

Testing the patient experience (Anonymous Hospital)

The Chief Executive Officer dresses down on occasions and dons old clothes, takes a carrier bag and sits in public areas waiting to be asked what he is doing there. He has also tried to get into wards to see how far he can go before being challenged. This gives him first hand knowledge of what is going on in the wards and waiting rooms.

Nurse A&E triage (e.g. St. Helier Hospital)

Everyone that attends A&E is first spoken to by nurses to see if they need to be at A&E and if not signpost them to other services.

The nurses talk to the patients to understand why they have come to A&E, and talk about options for self-care.

- Around 65% of A&E attendees are redirected elsewhere.
- Patients are very receptive to this service.
- The number of repeat visitors to A&E has reduced considerably.

Q: Does your local hospital listen to patient ideas to improve care?



PAGB is the trade association representing manufacturers of over-the-counter medicines and food supplements.

Established in 1919, PAGB administers a self-regulatory code of advertising practice.

For more details on PAGB, OTC medicines, food supplements and self care email libby.whittaker@pagb.co.uk or call 020 7421 9318.

The logo for 2020health.org features a stylized heart icon in purple and teal, followed by the text '2020health.org' in a teal, sans-serif font.

For more information

NHS Choices
www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx

Kissing it Better
www.kissingitbetter.co.uk

Self-care week takes place each year in November

Patient action groups are known as Local Improvement Networks (LINKs) these will be changing their name to Healthwatch
www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

For Hospital complaints and issues contact your Hospital Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) www.pals.nhs.uk

For issues with social care services contact your Local Government Ombudsman
www.lgo.org.uk

Don't forget for more information on your condition visit www.mapofmedicine.com

About 2020health Vision: A healthy community

2020health is an independent, grass-roots, health and technology policy Think Tank. Interested in realistic solutions we:

- Capture the insight of the NHS
- Shape policy with grass-roots common sense
- Ask the questions about cultural impact

2020health engages health experts, patients and staff in the public and business sectors through research publications, discussion roundtables and public events. We aim to restore trust, confidence and responsibility to professionals and enable people to have their say through active participation and networking.