

# Improving Access to Psychological therapies for patients with Diabetes – examples of developments Nationally and across the South West.

## SOUTH WEST EXAMPLE

**Psychotherapy Intervention for reducing admissions in patients with Type 1 Diabetes – Royal United Hospital, Bath.**

### Upshot

The cost impact of Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA) over a 4 year period was £255,750. The cost of Psychotherapist time (part time) is £12,000. The cost/benefit ratio was calculated to be 1:29 with every £1 spent on psychotherapy time resulting in £29 in costs saved.

### **Aim**

To explore whether providing access to specialised psychotherapy for patients with type 1 diabetes can help reduce HbA1c levels and reduce admission incidents.

### **Project**

Two cohorts of patients were identified in the initial pilot:

- Patients admitted with type 1 diabetes.
- Patients suffering psychological distress relating to their type 1 diabetes, through Consultant and Diabetic Specialist Nurse appointments.

Following psychological assessment these patients were then offered access to specialised diabetes psychotherapy. These were 50 min sessions with a Psychotherapist exploring belief systems and emotions that might contribute to neglect of their diabetes self-care, and identifying ways of improving self-care.

The initial cohort of patients was small, but has increased over time as results have demonstrated the potential to decrease admissions and reduce HbA1c.

### **Results**

23 patients were identified as being known to the Inpatients Diabetes Team as having frequent admissions, and following psychological assessment were offered Psychotherapist input. The table below summarises the cost savings made following this intervention.

<b>Before Intervention (24 months prior to referral)</b>		<b>After Intervention (24 months post referral)</b>	
253 A&E attendances	£53,130	166 A&E attendances	£34,860
73 DKA admissions	£150,627	47 DKA admissions	£97,008
3 other admissions	£4896	3 other admissions	£3060
Total cost	£208,653	Total cost	£134,928
<b>Saving - £73,725</b>			

### Reducing HbA1c

55 patients with type 1 diabetes were identified by the diabetes multi-disciplinary team as needing psychological input, and 27 were willing to participate. Following 12 x 50 min sessions, there was a mean 29% drop in HbA1c from 102 to 73 with patients reporting better quality of life, and better understanding of themselves, and their relationship with their health.

### **Summary**

Overall this was a low cost intervention which had a large impact on patient care, demonstrating good outcomes, and return on investment.

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## **NATIONAL EXAMPLE**

### **Integrated care for people with diabetes - Hertfordshire Wellbeing Service**

The Wellbeing Service is an Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT) service. This is a government initiative to provide easily accessible, evidence based treatments, to the general population experiencing common mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. Hertfordshire Wellbeing Team has four teams located in GP surgeries and community settings covering the whole county offering free and confidential talking therapy and practical support for Hertfordshire residents experiencing a wide range of mental health problems.

The aim of the service is to help people across the county to be able to access psychological therapy and social care support, to help them achieve better psychological health and wellbeing, enabling them to gain or remain in employment and to participate in daily living activities. The service also provides support for carers, people who are struggling with the reality of living with long term physical health conditions or who are experiencing low mood and anxiety during or after pregnancy.

For more information on the Hertfordshire Wellbeing Service: [HERE](#)

## **MORE INFORMATION**

30% people with a long term physical health condition also have a co-morbid mental health problem, mostly anxiety and depression. In addition, up to 70% of people with Medically Unexplained Symptoms also have depression and/or anxiety disorders. These common mental health disorders are detectable and treatable.

‘Diabetes in Healthcare’ is a free training course, accredited by the Royal College of Nurses and Royal Pharmaceutical Society that is open to everyone [www.diabetesinhealthcare.co.uk](http://www.diabetesinhealthcare.co.uk). Additionally this is the link to the Diabetes UK Primary Care Network [www.diabetes.org.uk/Training-competencies/](http://www.diabetes.org.uk/Training-competencies/) which includes access to useful resources for supporting patients psychological care, when managing their diabetes <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/emotional-and-psychological-support-and-care-in-diabetes>

For more information on IAPT from NHSE please follow this link: [HERE](#)