2 New consultation types

Group consultations for diabetes in Slough

The idea
As part of the GP Access Fund scheme in Slough, a number of practices, working with the Experience Led Care Programme (ELC) has been supporting five practices in Slough to prepare to and run group consultations. Several are now well on their way to applying group consultations as part of routine general practice.

Group consultations - also called shared medical appointments, group medical appointments, group appointments - are medical appointments delivered by a clinician in a supportive peer group setting. They replace routine one to one appointments. They potentially doubles productivity and access to routine care and follow up appointments.

Impact
After the first four months, the five practices reported positive changes, and a further seven local practices have expressed an interest in joining the project. GPs have enjoyed working in this way, and there has been very positive feedback from patients. Both report that they are managing to discuss important issues they don't normally include in consultations. The group consultation approach is proving applicable to patients from S Asian backgrounds as well as White British people, and early feedback indicates it may actually work best for people with the most complex needs and those who are poorly compliant with monitoring traditionally.

Implementation tips
GPs often have a number of concerns about the feasibility and suitability of this approach. Consider booking a few trial sessions with expert facilitation before seeking commitment to shift to this model in the longer term.

Link(s)
www.sloughccg.nhs.uk/images/Group_Consultations.pdf
www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/futurenhs/pm-ext-access/wave-one/pm-about/#pil12