

Ensuring a quality standardised approach to the delivery of the NHS Health Check Programme across Derbyshire Using Behaviour Change Approaches

Background and context

In 2018 renewed focus on health checks in Derbyshire was prompted following a decrease in practice engagement. The aim was to ensure quality standardised NHS Health Check programme delivery across Derbyshire.

Step 1. To understand the issues we conducted a GP Practice Training Audit, alongside practice observations. Two behavioural targets were identified; a) to increase uptake of training by NHS delivery staff, and b) to increase delivery in staff confidence during behaviour change conversations.

Step 2. Using the COM-B model of behaviour, we explored barriers to training sign-up (i.e. time, priorities elsewhere), and behaviour change conversations (i.e. lack of training, 'tick box' perception).

Step 3. A range of interventions were then selected to address our behavioural targets including a) two-day training course, b) half-day refresher training, c) Health Check Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) workshops, and d) a Primary Care support pack.

Step 4. To increase the effectiveness of interventions developed, we applied behaviour change principles (such as EAST, in which desired change is made Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely). For example, the core training programme was reduced from three to two days, and half-day refresher training was set-up. We also provided up-skilling opportunities such as behaviour change conversation training as a mandatory module, termed 'Quality Conversations'. This was supplemented by a support pack design to increase engagement (including lost potential income as a result of under-activity, and sharing of techniques for increasing uptake such as re-worded letters, and the use of primer and prompt texts).

Outcomes

The monitoring of outcomes remains ongoing, **Step 5.** To date, training uptake has increased significantly (within the first year, 74% of all GP Practices have attended), 95% of attendees rated the training positively (including Quality Conversations content) and engagement of practices improved, including 47% increased uptake from those practices performing less well.

Learning and next steps

Reflection has been key to the success of this project, and has allowed the multi-disciplinary project team to tailor interventions dynamically (i.e. tweaking training content or communication materials to increase engagement based on feedback or data patterns).

Next steps for Derbyshire are localised targeting for GP practices that remain disengaged, a similar approach to increase invitation and uptake rates (drawing on national Behavioural Insights research), and sharing learning with local partners (i.e. CCG and NHS Trusts).