

What *is* care planning anyway?

Making the best out of your appointment

Care planning is a process that allows you to be actively involved in deciding, agreeing and taking responsibility in how your diabetes is managed.

What does care planning involve?

Care planning is an ongoing process and focuses on the time you spend with your healthcare professional and aims to make that as productive as possible.

When you and your healthcare professional come together you should feel confident to set the agenda together and discuss what is important to both of you.

The care planning process is linked to your yearly diabetes check-up (or annual review) and encourages you to think about what you might like to discuss once you have the results of your diabetes checks and measurements. At the appointment you should be able to discuss your results, share information about your health and wellbeing, set goals and create an action plan to help you cope with your diabetes.

In particular you should:

- 1. Set your own personal goal or action** which will help you cope better with your diabetes e.g., you may decide to start walking instead of taking the bus once a week
- 2. Have a documented care plan** – any goals you set should be recorded. GPs in Lambeth and Southwark have an online template for this but you can also make a record, for example using My Health Plan.
- 3. Be able to review these goals at subsequent appointments** – you are more likely to succeed with your goals if you follow these up with your healthcare professional. You can agree the best way to do this with your healthcare professional

These are what we are calling the **minimum standards of care planning** and should be happening at every appropriate diabetes appointment.

Care planning is not about making you do something you don't feel comfortable with. It recognises that some people will want more control over their care than others but everyone should have the opportunity and know what to expect in an appointment.

Why is care planning important?

On average you only spend a few hours a year with your healthcare professional. It is important that this time is used in the best possible way and care planning is a way to do this.

People with diabetes report a real change in their diabetes control when they take part in care planning.