

Encouraging patient attendance at diabetic eye screening

A four pronged approach

Guy Roberts, Fiona Kenyon, Matthew Dowbekin,
Victoria Dickman, Bev Haworth

Patient Engagement

Diabetic retinopathy is among the most common causes of sight loss in the working age population.¹ A greater uptake at screening improves the chances of reducing sight loss.

The National Screening Committee Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) look for programmes to maximize update with KPI DE1 covering – **Uptake of the routine digital screening event.**²

North Mersey Diabetic Eye Screenings current uptake is 90%. Yet the 10% who the programme are not reaching are perhaps most at risk of developing sight threatening retinopathy. North Mersey Programme is using a variety of methods to increase patient engagement.

A Four Pronged Approach

Four areas were identified by the programme to improve patients’ engagement and attendance:



Direct Patient Engagement

Direct patient engagement in the community allows the service to extend the message of the importance of screening to patients at a face to face level.

North Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening Team Leader Fiona Kenyon volunteers in her own time for Diabetes UK and is continually involved with campaigns at the local community level. This allows her to:

- Campaign to continuously raise diabetes awareness in the local community.
- Work as part of a team with the shared goal of making emotional wellbeing a routine and integral part of diabetes care.

Fiona’s work in direct patient’s engagement emanated to her being awarded the 2019 Inspire Award for campaigning and influencing by Diabetes UK. Her work provides the service with further opportunities to directly engage patients and link with Diabetes UK to support both our work and theirs.



Fiona (pictured centre) receiving her award from Clare Howarth, Head of the North of England at Diabetes UK and with her colleagues for North Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening.

Patient Education

Patient education encourages continuous attendance. currently North Mersey DESP provide:

- Information at screening sessions
- Post screening leaflets
- Signposting services

Development: Two members of the screening team are developing a patient education session to be delivered at community diabetes education sessions.



Members of North Mersey Diabetic Eye Screening during North Mersey DESP teaching session on World Sight Day.

Aims:

- Arm patient with information about screening.
- Highlight the importance of attendance.
- Debunk any popular misconceptions regarding the test.
- Offer an opportunity for patients to practically engage with the screening team alongside the community diabetes specialists to integrate care and enhance awareness and understanding.

GP Engagement

Currently when patients DNA eye screening appointments, they are offered two strikes. Failure to attend either results in a 12 months call back.

North Mersey DESP developed an extended GP pack to engage patients who attend the GP throughout the year for unrelated reasons. North Mersey DESP felt that engaging at this point of care within GP surgeries provides a further method to reach patients and encourage screening attendance.

Do you have diabetes?
Have you had your eyes screened?



As someone with diabetes, your eyes are at risk of damage. Screening can detect the condition early before you notice any changes to your vision

Call today to check when you are next due
Diabetic Eye Screening

0151 529 8401

Pictured is an example of DESP eye screening poster sent in GP pack to held enhance GP engagement.

The programme has produced an extended GP pack which includes:

- Information for surgeries.
- Posters for both GP offices and waiting rooms signposting screening.
- Diabetic Eye Screening overview information.
- Programme Contacts.

Online Communication

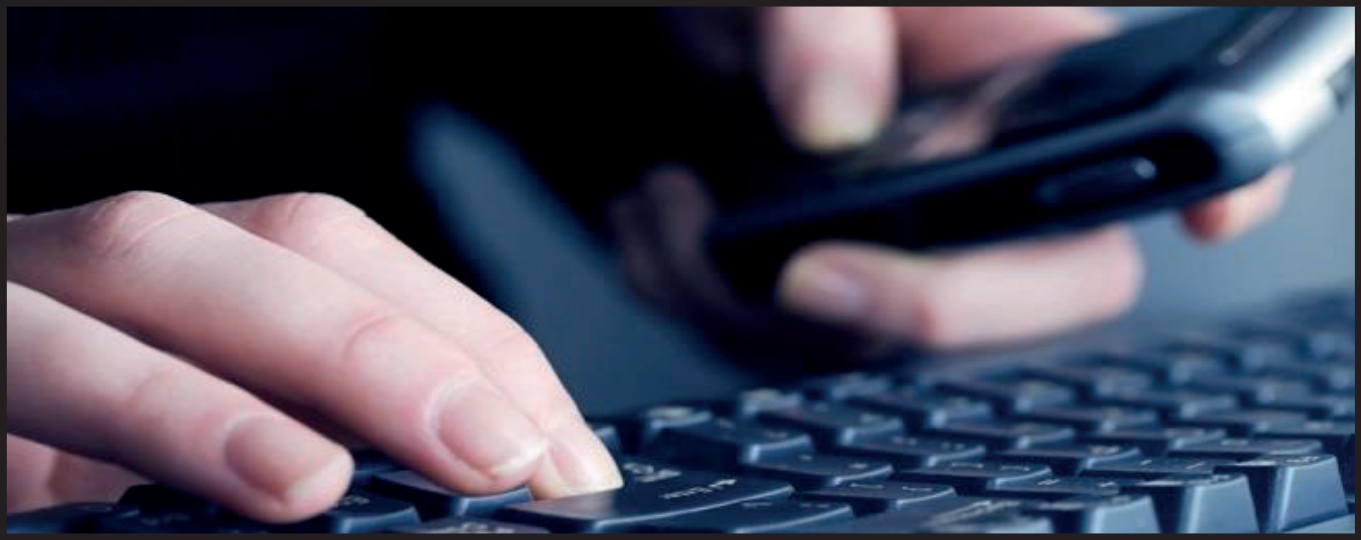
Whilst many patients may not currently use the internet for their diabetic care it is still important to have an up-to-date web presence to cater for those who do. It was therefore decided that the programme should create a web presence for the service.

As part of our regular patient satisfaction survey, patients were asked the following question:

Would you be interested in using a dedicated diabetic eye screening website?

Yes	No	Don't Know
110	219	77

The data suggested that, if extrapolated to cover our entire population instead of a 1000 patient sample, that there were around 2500 patients who currently wanted a service that we were not providing.



Work commenced on a website to provide basic information led by a member of staff with prior experience of copywriting for screening programme websites. A three phase roll out was developed:

Phase One	A basic set of pages with information about the programme’s screening locations, geographic coverage, senior management team, contact information, and main objectives. These pages were deemed the easiest and quickest to complete, in order to provide a web presence as soon as possible. This was completed in February 2019
Phase Two	More detailed pages on the screening process and information on results. These needed more liaison with the clinical leads to ensure the information provided was accurate and appropriate. [DECEMBER 2019]
Phase Three	YouTube videos to provide more information on the screening process, information about the biological mechanisms of diabetic retinopathy, and video versions of the patient education presentations developed as another part of this project and a potential webchat forum to provide patient another route to engage with the DES service. [2020 – Onwards]

You can visit our website at:
www.aintreehospital.nhs.uk/our-services/a-z-of-services/diabetic-eye-screening

References

1.

Gov.co.uk, **Diabetic Eye Screening: Programme Overview** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/diabetic-eye-screening-programme-overview>, [2019]

2.

Gov.co.uk, **Diabetic Eye Screening: Programme Overview** <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/diabetic-eye-screening-programme-overview>, [2019]