15 HEALTHCARE ESSENTIALS
CAMPAIGNING FOR BETTER DIABETES CARE
The 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign details the checks and services that every adult with diabetes should expect. There are slightly different guidelines for children – for more information go to www.diabetes.org.uk/type-1-essentials

The 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist is useful for patients who have not been seen by their healthcare professional for some time or who have missed their retinal screening appointment, and also for new patients who are sometimes overwhelmed with information! I personally find the checklist very helpful: it’s clear, to the point and easy for patients to read.

Mary Griffin, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Guy’s and St Thomas’
Every person with diabetes, whether they have Type 1 or Type 2, and wherever they live in the UK, deserves the best treatment and services.

There is a minimum level of care that people with diabetes should expect every year. Getting all the checks and seeing the right healthcare professionals are crucial in supporting people to manage their condition. That’s why our 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign is so vitally important.

The 15 Healthcare Essentials set out the care that everyone with diabetes is entitled to from their healthcare team. We campaign to make sure people know what they are, and work with healthcare professionals who are responsible for diabetes care to make sure people are receiving them.

In the last two years we’ve distributed our 15 Healthcare Essentials checklists to people with diabetes, to healthcare professionals and to commissioners. We’ve produced posters and materials in 11 languages. So far, we’ve reached over 1,500,000 people.

Diabetes UK is also working hard to influence the provision and quality of care both nationally and locally by engaging with people with diabetes and their families and friends, the general public, healthcare professionals, local and national decision makers and politicians.

This report shows just some of the ways that we have worked with healthcare professionals, corporate partners and our volunteers to really make an impact on the care that people living with diabetes receive.
The Diabetes Modernisation Initiative (DMI) is a programme set up by Guy’s and St Thomas’ Charity to transform diabetes care in south London. All of their work is designed around their patients, who are informed, involved and in charge of what happens to them.

One way they are improving care is with a Diabetes Patient Information Pack. The pack offers people with diabetes a starting point to understand their condition and learn how to take better control of it. The Diabetes UK 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist is a key part of the pack, laying out the minimum level of healthcare that every person with diabetes deserves and should expect.

In 2012, GPs and primary care practitioners in Lambeth and Southwark gave packs to over 1,500 patients. 2,500 more were handed out by diabetes specialist nurses in July 2013.

The packs and 15 Healthcare Essentials checklists have been a fantastic success. Healthcare professionals have praised the information and support provided and how it is presented. Patients said it helped them understand what care they should get and how they could manage their condition better.

Jenny George from the Diabetes Modernisation Initiative said: “The Diabetes Patient Information Pack starts patients on a path. It puts knowledge in their hands and gives them the power to make positive changes to their lives. The more they change things for the better, the more confidence they have to manage their condition.”

“Put the patient first.

The 15 Healthcare Essentials lie at the heart of the pack. They let patients know not just what care they could get but what care they should get.

It’s a simple idea which makes a big difference.”

Jenny George, DMI Self Management Programme Lead
“After 20 years living with the condition, I thought I had it all figured out. But the 15 Healthcare Essentials have not only helped me to realise aspects of my diabetes care needed improving, both by myself and my healthcare team, but enabled me to ask for help that I was unaware existed.”

Kirsty McLellan

Kirsty McLellan has lived with Type 1 diabetes for 20 years. She is just one of thousands of people who have not always received or had access to all 15 essential checks and services. Something that she wasn’t aware of until it was too late. She didn’t receive regular eye screenings and as a result, developed diabetic retinopathy and lost 25 per cent of the vision in her right eye.

Since reading about the 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign two years ago, Kirsty has used the checklist not only to discuss her care with her diabetes team, but to educate herself. Before the campaign, she was unaware that she was entitled to emotional and psychological support. Now, she has better control of her diabetes than ever and is confident and satisfied with the care that she receives.
“Good checklists are precise, efficient and easy to use. They can make priorities clearer and prompt people to function better. The Diabetes UK 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist provides a useful starting point to assess the effectiveness of a diabetes service; we have been able to see where the deficiencies in our own service lie and have made amends to ensure that these areas are covered in future.”

Dr Paul Grant

Through the 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign, we let people with diabetes know what care they should expect to receive, and empower them to demand more from the NHS. The campaign checklist is also useful in prompting healthcare professionals to evaluate their approach and deliver consistently good care.

Dr Paul Grant, a Specialist Registrar in Diabetes and Endocrinology at Tunbridge Wells Hospital, did just that. He was inspired by the 15 Healthcare Essentials to examine his own practice and establish how many of the 15 checks his patients were receiving.

The results showed that Dr Grant was providing most of the 15 essentials and scored well in monitoring HbA1c, blood pressure, body mass index, retinal screening and cholesterol. Where he found that he was slightly lacking – smoking cessation advice, psychological assessment, measuring waist circumference and checking about pregnancy planning – he decided to take action to modify his practice and improve patient care.
The 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign has already helped thousands of people living with diabetes. People like Jeff Warlock. Like so many others, Jeff understands the importance of regular checks and the difference that a change in medication can make – and the worry when things are missed.

Following a thorough check up in October 2011, Jeff left his doctor’s surgery feeling impressed and happy with the care he received for his Type 2 diabetes. However after reading about the 15 Healthcare Essentials, he became concerned when he was not called for an annual review in October 2012.

After four months of waiting, he raised the issue with his GP and was immediately given an appointment with the practice nurse. He received a full healthcare check, a change in his medication and now has an ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of his medication levels.

LIVING WITH TYPE 2 DIABETES

If I hadn’t read about the 15 Healthcare Essentials, I wouldn’t have had the confidence to speak to my doctor about the annual checks I’m entitled to and should expect to receive. I can only hope others will take heart from my experience.

Jeff Warlock
Diabetic retinopathy is the most common cause of blindness among people of working age in the UK. That’s why we urge every person with diabetes to make absolutely sure that they attend a retinal screening appointment every year.

Annual retinal screening is essential to detect retinopathy early. This means that treatment can be kept to a minimum and is so much more effective.

We work closely with the National Eye Screening Programme, and have distributed more than 100,000 checklists at 30 retinal screening clinics throughout the UK. Every patient who attends an appointment receives a checklist, many of whom are unaware of the vital diabetes checks and services that they should be receiving.

The 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign is a brilliant concept; it allows patients to take control over their personal wellbeing. We advise patients to discuss the 15 Healthcare Essentials in more detail with their GP, and encourage them to follow through on those points that apply to them.

Tanya Grewal, Diabetic Retinal Screening Manager, 1st Retinal Screen Ltd
Our Diabetes Voices are our army on the ground. They campaign locally to improve diabetes care in their communities. They take campaigns like the 15 Healthcare Essentials and turn them into action, influencing change on the frontline.

David Edwards is a member of the Sutton and Merton Diabetes Network and is one of our amazing Diabetes Voices. He has campaigned tirelessly for everyone with diabetes to receive their 15 Healthcare Essentials, influencing retinal screening clinics in the area to hand out checklists to all patients attending their appointments. But that wasn’t enough.

Realising that there were some people who missed their appointments and were therefore not receiving the checklist, he persuaded clinics to send the checklist with every appointment letter as well as handing them out in clinics. This made sure that even more people were made aware of the minimum level of care they should receive.

In total, David has helped make more than 30,000 people in his area aware of the 15 Healthcare Essentials, and shows no signs of stopping.

“I realised that not everyone attended their appointments, so weren’t receiving the checklist. I raised this with the clinics and now the checklists are sent with every appointment letter, so everyone is being informed about the 15 Healthcare Essentials that they should be receiving.”

David Edwards, Diabetes Voice
Our relationships with corporate partners are vital to help us reach the 3.8 million people living with diabetes in the UK. Boots and Tesco are just two of our partners who understand the impact that working with Diabetes UK can make, and have been instrumental in raising awareness of the 15 Healthcare Essentials through their pharmacies.

Available across 2,500 Boots stores, the 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist is included as a fundamental part of their diabetes information packs. A staggering 15,000 people have picked up a checklist so far.

Over the coming months, every one of the 375 Tesco pharmacies in the UK will include the 15 Healthcare Essentials as part of the vital diabetes information it provides for customers.

We are delighted to be working with Diabetes UK to distribute the 15 Healthcare Essentials checklists as part of the information packs available for our customers in store. This is another example of how community pharmacy can play a key role in improving access to the right information and support to help people living with diabetes feel in control of their condition.

Peter Bainbridge, Director of Pharmacy at Boots UK

The 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist is a fundamental part of the diabetes information that we provide for our customers in our pharmacies and stores. Through our National Charity Partnership with Diabetes UK, we are doing our part to make sure that everyone with diabetes knows about the checks that they should be receiving.

Adrian Price, Tesco Pharmacy Manager
We have teams across the UK dedicated to making sure that people with diabetes know about and have access to the care that they are entitled to. Their networks and expertise are vital to influencing change and improving diabetes care locally.

ENGLAND

EASTERN
Across Peterborough, Hertfordshire, and mid Essex, pharmacies have distributed over 6,000 checklists. 510 healthcare professionals at events across north east Essex, Luton and Dunstable and West Norfolk received information on the campaign in their delegate packs.

LONDON
GPs, diabetes specialist nurses, retinopathy clinics and volunteers like David Edwards have all worked tirelessly to make sure people with diabetes know about the care they should receive.

MIDLANDS
10,000 checklists have been given out across Walsall and Wolverhampton CCGs through the two diabetes networks. Over 2,000 people received a copy of the 15 Healthcare Essentials at 12 diabetes public engagement events.

NORTH WEST
Bolton CCG include a 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist with eye and foot screening letters. Cheshire West CCG promotes the 15 Healthcare Essentials through eye screening letters.

NORTHERN AND YORKSHIRE
In Rotherham the 15 Healthcare Essentials are included in the diabetes guidelines for GPs and primary care workers. The Northallerton Voluntary Group pay for the 15 Healthcare Essentials to be printed in the back of treatment diaries for patients in Northallerton. In Sunderland volunteers worked with healthcare professionals to assess whether people with diabetes were getting all 15 checks.

SOUTH EAST
Dr Paul Grant used the 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist to modify and improve his practice.

SOUTH WEST
Wiltshire Public Health are distributing a ‘Diabetes Blue Book’ based on the 15 Healthcare Essentials to all people with diabetes to allow them to keep track of the annual checks they should be receiving.

NORTHERN IRELAND
Checklists have been distributed at 166 GP surgeries, 10 Diabetes UK Healthy Lifestyle Roadshows and to 311 delegates at two professional healthcare conferences.

SCOTLAND
The 15 Healthcare Essentials are included in the Patient Held Summary (PHS) available from all NHS GP practices and healthcare professionals. In the first six months of 2013 the Diabetes UK Scotland team have given a copy of the 15 Healthcare Essentials to 4,000 people living with diabetes.

WALES
The team are advising the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Service for Wales, who are sending the 15 Healthcare Essentials to all patients in Wales and are looking at providing material at their venues.
CAMPAIGN
Diabetes UK is campaigning hard for people living with diabetes to have access to all 15 checks and services that they are entitled to, but we can’t do it without your help.
You can make a difference by sharing the 15 Healthcare Essentials checklist with patients with diabetes in your healthcare setting, either by giving them out at appointments or by leaving copies in your waiting area. You can also display posters with the 15 checks in your clinic rooms or waiting areas. To order free posters and checklists and, to find out more go to www.diabetes.org.uk/15-essentials
Could you use the 15 Healthcare Essentials campaign to help evaluate the diabetes service that is being offered in your place of work? Dr Paul Grant used the checklist to identify gaps in care and improve the service he delivers to people with diabetes (see page 11). Diabetes UK can support you in providing the very best care for your patients. For more information go to www.diabetes.org.uk/professionals

RAISE YOUR VOICE
Have you or someone you know been affected by diabetes? Do you want to raise your voice and make a difference to diabetes services and care like David Edwards (page 16)? Help us change lives and futures by joining Diabetes Voices. For more information on how you can sign up and get involved, go to www.diabetes.org.uk/voices

JOIN US
Become a supporting member or, if you’re a healthcare practitioner, a professional member of Diabetes UK. You’ll receive many benefits, including our magazines and updates on the latest developments in diabetes treatment, care and research.

BECOME A PARTNER
Joining forces with Diabetes UK means you’ll be working with us to address the nation’s biggest health threat. We welcome corporate partnerships and are always willing to discuss new opportunities to work together.

Call us on 0345 123 2399* 
Email info@diabetes.org.uk 
Go to www.diabetes.org.uk

*Calls may be recorded for quality and training purposes.

VOLUNTEER
The passion, skill and dedication of Diabetes UK volunteers means we can do more for people with diabetes. Whether you want to raise awareness, support people with diabetes, raise funds or help run a local group, by joining our team of exceptional volunteers you will help us have greater impact.

WE HOPE YOU’LL GET INVOLVED