

## BUILDING A CASE FOR CHANGE

**Evidence-based campaigning and influencing is really important. Not only will it help you develop a thorough understanding of a situation, it will also back up your campaign when approaching local decision makers. Showing clear evidence will convince them about your argument and make you feel more confident and in control. Whether you are trying to influence other people at a meeting, or launching a campaign, it is important to ensure you have the necessary evidence to prove the need for change.**

### HOW THIS MODULE WORKS

This learning module has been designed so that you can learn at your own pace, whenever suits you. The module starts with all the information you need to know. There is then a 'Putting it into practice' exercise so you can practise some of the things you have just learnt about, and check that you have understood everything.

The 'Want More?' section on page 3 gives further information and ideas.

If you have any questions or comments, call the Diabetes Voices team on **020 7424 1008** or email **diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk**

### AIMS OF THIS MODULE

- To learn how to gather information from service users.
- To learn how to represent the views of others.
- To learn where to gather statistical information and data on service performance.

### WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE CASE FOR CHANGE?

A good case for change will include both personal stories and data or statistical information that demonstrate what the problem is.

Personal experiences or views can be very powerful in highlighting issues and problems, and clearly showing the need for change. These can be particularly effective if you are involving media as a lever for bringing about change.

Data or statistical information shows that these stories are not individual cases but instead part of a wider problem.

### 15 Healthcare Essentials

Our patient checklist leaflet Diabetes – the care you should receive outlines the 15 healthcare essentials that everyone with diabetes should expect to receive. You can use this checklist to support your case for change. If you can prove that any of the 15 essential care measures are not being delivered in an area, you have a good case to ask for change.

### FINDING OUT THE VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF OTHER PEOPLE

While your own experiences can be very powerful in highlighting issues and problems, it will often not be enough to convince professionals or decision makers of the need for change. You will need to present evidence that other people share your concerns.

#### Representing others

A variety of opinions can really boost your campaign – and even highlight issues you'd not considered. You may have had a good experience of care in hospital, but others may have not – highlight this and describe all experiences and concerns, even if they're different from your own.

#### Gathering information - informal approaches

Often, you will be able to do this by talking to other people living with diabetes in your area. If you are a member of a local Diabetes UK voluntary group or are in touch with other people living with diabetes regularly you will have plenty of opportunities to talk to people who can share their experiences. Some other approaches include:

- finding out what other people are saying about services in your local area via websites such as [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- using Twitter, Facebook and other social media to get in touch with other people.
- talking to local service user groups or professionals who are sympathetic to your issues.

If you are using these informal methods, it is worth considering how you can make sure the people you are speaking to are representative of the wide range of people with diabetes. If you are building the case for change locally, it might be worth finding out from your local authority what the diversity of your local population is - this will give you a clearer idea who you should be looking to hear from.

Make sure that you record all the information you gather from others and check with them that you have correctly understood their story. You may be asked about when incidences took place, or at which clinic or GP surgery.

These approaches won't take up a lot of your time and don't require people to take part in an interview.

The downside to this approach is that it can be difficult to get answers to more complex issues and you can end up with a series of personal views that are difficult to present to others.

You can also use more formal methods such as questionnaires, interviews and surveys to gather personal experiences. Find out more about this in the 'Want more?' section on page 3.

## HOW CAN I FIND OUT ABOUT MY LOCAL SERVICES?

**The Diabetes Watch online tool** helps you to find out how good your local diabetes services are compared to the national average.

Using data from national audits, surveys and other sources in England, Scotland and Wales, the tool shows you how the care and checks that form your **15 healthcare essentials** are being provided in your health areas.

For example, you could see that, for your local health area, 95% of people have had their HbA1c recorded in the last year, against a national figure of 91%, indicating that performance for that healthcare essential is better than the national average.

This information can also be useful in enabling you to celebrate success, highlighting what is working well in your area, as well as asking for improvements.

## OTHER WAYS TO FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR AREA

### Contact the Diabetes Voices Team:

Diabetes UK collects and monitors information about diabetes services across the UK. If you're looking for specific information about your area, we may be able to help. Email us at [diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk)

### Using Parliament or your National Assembly:

Getting information that compares your area to the rest of the country is often a key part of your campaign. A good way to do this is to table a parliamentary or assembly question. The Diabetes Voices Team can help you do this. Parliamentary and assembly questions can only cover matters of fact, not opinion. So, for example, you could ask for the ratio of patients to Diabetes Nurse Specialists in your area, but not why there are not more nurses.

### Freedom of Information Requests (FOI):

If you need local information, you can now get facts and statistics from local Government and health trusts by requesting this under the Freedom of Information Act. Before making an FOI, check that the information is not already publicly available. For help and advice, email the Diabetes Voices Team at [diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk](mailto:diabetesvoices@diabetes.org.uk)

## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Use the **15 healthcare essentials** to identify which of the 15 you don't think are being delivered in your area. Write down your own experiences and stories that you have heard from others about when these have not been delivered. Now use the **Diabetes Watch online tool** to gather data about the issues that you have found.

How powerful is your case for change now? Do you think you would be able to use this evidence to persuade others? Write a list of all the other places you could go to gather further evidence, including both online resources and meeting other people living with diabetes.

## WANT MORE?

This section gives you information about extra steps you can take to further build your case for change.

### Gathering information - formal approaches

If you want to find out about the views of more people or, if the topic you are interested in is more complicated, you might want to use a simple questionnaire to help gather the information. This has the advantage of allowing you to get consistent information from everyone you talk to and will allow you to compare information better. If you ask the right kinds of question you will be able to present examples and quotes to support your case.

You can ask people to fill in a questionnaire themselves or you can fill it in in discussion with them. Remember that some people will not want to respond – it is important not to pressure people into taking part.

**Developing a questionnaire doesn't have to be a complicated process but there are a few things you will need to think about.**

#### 1. Think about what you want to find out

- What do you want to know?
- What do you want the information for?
- What are the main questions?

#### 2. Some practical decisions

- Decide what information you want to know about the people you talk to (age, where they live, the services they use, name, sex, ethnicity and so on)?
- Do you need yes or no answers (eg Have you received retinal screening this year?) or do you need to allow people to describe their experience, opinions or feelings (eg How do you feel about the retinal screening process?)?
- What are you going to do with the responses? Have you got time to look at and analyse the responses? How many can you cope with?
- How will you present the information you find out?

#### 3. Putting your questionnaire together

- Write down the questions you want to ask.
- Review the questions: Do you need them all? Do you think you will get the information you need?
- Ask other people to look at them. Do they understand

the question in the same way you do? Are they confused by any questions?

- Do you need to include any information or prompts to help people answer the question?
- You are gathering personal information about people so make sure you are able to explain how the information will be used and stored, and that are you acting on your own behalf, not on behalf of Diabetes UK.
- If you are asking people to give any personal information you will need to explain how you will keep their information confidential.

#### 4. Getting people to respond

- Will you discuss the questions with people or give them the questionnaire to fill in?
- If you are interviewing people, where will you do it? Do you need permission?
- If you are handing out the questionnaire, how will you get it to people?

### A word on questions

There are a number of different ways to ask a question. The main categories to consider for a simple questionnaire are 'open', 'closed' and 'scaled' questions.

### Closed questions

Answers are limited to a fixed set of responses. Examples of closed questions include:

- Yes/no questions  
eg. Did you have your feet checked in the last 6 months?
- Multiple choice  
eg. Did you have your feet checked:  
**A.** less than 6 months **B.** over 6 months ago  
**C.** more than 1 year ago **D.** never
- Scaled questions  
How satisfied were you with your most recent foot check?

1	2	3	4	5
Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor not satisfied	Not satisfied	Very unsatisfied

## Open questions

Open questions let people give their own answer without being limited to set responses. Open questions start with phrase like “What do you think..?” or “Can you tell me...?”.

## Two common types of open question are:

- Completely unstructured  
eg What do you think about foot checks?
- **Sentence completion**  
eg The most important thing that happens in my annual foot check is . . .

## What's next?

When you have collected your responses and analysed the information, you will need to produce a report or set of information that you can use to influence. Make sure that they key learning is clear and easy to understand.

Sometimes you will find things that surprise you or that go against your experience and you may need to do more work to understand the situation

## OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

### NICE Quality Standards

The NICE Standards set out the clinical standards of care people with diabetes should expect.

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qualitystandards/diabetesinadults/diabetesinadultsqualitystandard.jsp>

### Doctor Foster

The UK's leading independent provider of comparative health and social care information.

<http://www.drfooster.co.uk/localservices>

### NHS quality reports

Reports on the quality of NHS provider services.

<http://www.nhs.uk/aboutNHSChoices/professionals/healthandcareprofessionals/quality-accounts/Pages/quality-account-documents.aspx>

### Care Quality Commission

The independent regulator of the NHS. Use the website to search for information about your local services.

<http://www.cqc.org.uk>

### The National Diabetes Information Service (NDIS)

A comprehensive range of diabetes data, tools and information.

<http://www.diabetes-ndis.org>

## LETTER TEMPLATE TO ASK FOR INFORMATION

<insert name>

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <insert name>

I am writing as someone living with diabetes to find out more about <insert topic you want to find out about>.

In the UK one person is diagnosed with diabetes every three minutes and three people die from its complications every hour. Diabetes is a serious condition that can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness and amputation. Estimates indicate that the NHS spends some 9% of total hospital expenditure on treating diabetes and diabetes complications. Furthermore, an estimated 10% of NHS hospital beds are occupied by people with diabetes.

To help improve this situation Diabetes UK have created a simple patient checklist leaflet Diabetes – what care you should receive which outlines 15 essential diabetes care measures, based on the care standards set out by NICE and NHS Quality Improvement. These include blood glucose, blood pressure and cholesterol checks; monitoring of eyes, kidney function, legs, feet and weight; individual care planning, smoking cessation advice, emotional and psychological support; and guidance on accessing specialist care and education courses.

I am writing to you to find out more about diabetes services and care locally and would appreciate if you could answer the following questions:

- <Insert list of questions>

Thank you in advance for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

<Your Name>