

# House of Care

## What patients told us

Your GP practice is a House of Care practice. House of Care is a way of planning individual care for people with long term conditions. This means making sure patients and carers are involved in decisions about their treatment, care and support, and that they are able to act on these decisions.

We wanted to understand how well this approach worked for patients who had taken part in House of Care. We did this by interviewing 29 patients from 9 GP practices in Greater Glasgow and Clyde. All of the patients interviewed had type 2 diabetes. Some had other conditions too. Most were aged 55 or over.

### What's different

The changes patients noticed were:

1. An information gathering appointment with standard tests.
2. Receiving the test results by letter in advance of an appointment with their practice nurse, or their GP.
3. Having a care plan agreed at that appointment.
4. Patients having more opportunity to discuss their condition(s).

### Results letters

The benefits of receiving written test results before the consultation appointment were:

- They helped patients prepare for their appointment including thinking of questions for the nurse or GP.
- Having results in writing was much clearer than being told them.
- Understanding the test results motivated patients to improve their health.
- Positive test results reassured patients who were managing well.
- Patients were able to share the results with others such as family members.

Most patients thought that the test results were set out in a clear way and were easy to understand, but some found some elements confusing. Some patients also received



“I found it beneficial because it’s alright them saying your blood pressure’s up, it should be this, it should be that. But it’s a big difference having to read it – especially as you’re given the chart on the left showing where it should be. Then you can do the comparison yourself. I find it useful.”

previous test results so they could compare them. We need to do more work on making the test results as easy to understand as possible and in the languages patients speak.

### Care planning

The care plan provided a helpful structure for patients to discuss their health with the nurse or GP at their appointment. It helped to ensure that everything the patient wanted to discuss was covered.

Patients also found it helpful to have a copy of their care plan in writing after their consultation appointment.

**Nearly all patients were very happy with their appointments and felt at ease and listened to.**

If they were interested, patients were referred to services including weight management; diet support; exercise; and smoking cessation. Patients can, however, ask about these and other services at anytime.

Many patients who were interviewed said they had experienced low mood or depression. We need to make sure patients know about and can choose to be referred to services which could help with depression.

### Self-managing

Most patients felt that they had all the information and skills they needed to manage their condition. Some patients said they struggled with willpower and did not always make the right choices with diet and exercise. The written results and the chance to talk about these helped give patients a new focus and motivation.

Some patients felt they needed more information about diabetes, particularly those who had recently been diagnosed. GPs or practice nurses can let patients know about diabetes classes in their area.

Interviews were undertaken by Traci Leven Research

You can read her [full report](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk) at: <http://www.nhsggc.org.uk>  
Type in **House of care: patient experience report** in the search bar.

“The appointments are fine. There is no rush. You don’t feel as if you’re being rushed out of the door. They’re there to listen. They do seem to have time for you.”

“If the review didn’t take place, it would not have highlighted the depression, so I think it’s a good way for the GP and nurses to see if there are other issues as well.”



“When she showed me the graph, I could see that it’s been on the green for a wee while, but it’s now starting to creep up. I’d never been shown that before. They can tell you it’s going up or down, or it’s this or that – but until they show you on the graph, it doesn’t sink in. I thought that was spot on. You can see your full history.”