

Improving Education and Management of Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Through a Primary Care Fellowship Programme - a South London Experience

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Background

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a priority in the NHS long-term plan. It causes a quarter of all deaths in the UK and is the largest cause of premature mortality in deprived areas. It is the single biggest area where the NHS can save lives. Primary care clinicians can play a key role in CVD prevention.

The HIN learned via consulting with local stakeholders that additional training and education was needed to upskill south London primary care in this area.

Project Aims

The Fellowship programme was designed to support primary care to develop the knowledge and skills needed to work towards the NHS long-term plan ambition and the primary care Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service (DES) targets for 2022/23.

Methods

The HIN Fellowship was different from other education programmes for primary care:

- A project delivery element was included (i.e., to complete the programme the Fellows had to deliver a quality improvement project).
- CPD-accredited webinars were delivered by local secondary care clinicians who were also able to discuss local pathways and case studies relevant to the local population.
- The Fellows' time was not backfilled, they had to participate in the programme on their own time.

The programme was carefully designed to focus on participants' needs and put minimum pressure on an already stretched primary care workforce. Feedback was collected regularly (e.g. live polls at the end of each webinar), with arrangements made to adapt the programme accordingly where necessary.

Impact

The 40 quality improvement projects were delivered across 67 GP practices and were focused on improving the management of hypertension, lipids, familial hypercholesterolaemia or atrial fibrillation in primary care.

In total, 85 primary care clinicians participated with 19 education sessions delivered. The 40 quality improvement projects that were delivered covered a PCN population of 1,451,300 people.

Feedback

- ✓ **98% agree they feel more confident in delivering care to patients at risk of CVD as a result of the Fellowship**
- ✓ **96% agree they are supporting their colleagues more with CVD care as a result of the Fellowship** (e.g. raising awareness, sharing educational materials)
- ✓ **95% think their patients at risk of CVD have benefited as a result of the Fellowship**

