Improving Self-Management for Patients with Long-Term Conditions and the Role of Telephone Health Coaching

The Rise of Long Term Conditions
Telephone Coaching and the Rise of Self-Management
Telephone Coaching: A Revolution for Patients
Why Empowering Patients is Crucial to the Future of the NHS

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**Foreword**

RECENT YEARS have witnessed the rise of so-called person-centred care. It’s a term which can spark scorn from some people but it does highlight a growing recognition of the role we can all play in the delivery of our own care.

An important component of this comes through the rise of self-management. A more educated patient can adopt healthier behaviours and adopt a more proactive approach to managing long-term conditions.

This is important because the longer we live the more of us are likely to suffer from complex and ongoing conditions. By encouraging positive behaviour and proactive management, the NHS hopes to reduce the overall impact on the health service while improving the quality of care patients receive.

The question is: how can this be delivered? In our opening article Emma-Jane French, Managing Director of My Clinical Coach and Chief Operating Officer for Totally Health, talks about how telephone coaching can deliver the support patients need. It gives them access to trained experts who can provide quick advice and guidance on every aspect of their condition.

We will then focus on the rise of long-term conditions such as diabetes and COPD and the strain under which this is placing the NHS. Jo Roth will then look at the rise of self-management in the NHS. As he says, this is nothing new but it is still under-developed and much needs to be done to realise its potential.

James Butler will then look at examples of how telephone coaching services, such as the ones on offer from My Clinical Coach and Total Health, are working in the real world. Finally, we’ll focus on the future. We’ll see the importance of patient empowerment as well as some of the innovations coming to the market.

Self-management is a growing theme, but it’s important to avoid confusion. Many see it as neglect on the part of the health service – an attempt to push responsibility onto the patient to lighten the load. However, when managed correctly, it can empower patients to take control of their care. When that happens, the impact is felt not just by the patient, but by their friends, family, carers and the system as a whole.

Tom Cropper
Editor

Tom Cropper has produced articles and reports on various aspects of global business over the past 15 years. He has also worked as a copywriter for some of the largest corporations in the world, including ING, KPMG, and Zurich Insurance.

Men’s health coaching is not a new concept. The approach has seen success in America, Australia, Spain and Scandinavian nations for example – but specific, tailored nurse-led Health Coaching for patients with long-term conditions has, until now, not been widely used in the UK.

So, how have they done it, we hear you ask? How can a telephone Health Coaching service like My Clinical Coach help revolutionise the way patients with long-term conditions manage their own health independently and effectively?

Evidence points to the trend that the prevalence of people living with at least one long-term condition is on the increase and these patients generally have more interactions with the health service and greater dependency upon it. In England, 15 million people have a long-term condition and these people account for 70% of the NHS budget. Furthermore, the number of people in England over the age of 60 living with more than one condition is estimated at 6 million and is increasing.

The future health of millions of people and the sustainability of the NHS is dependent on different and innovative solutions for long-term conditions. These innovations need to assist in the agenda of improving self-management of these multiple and often-complex conditions. These innovations are simply about changing behaviours at a population and at an individual level.

At Totally Health and My Clinical Coach, the approach is to use telephone-based Health Coaching to engage individuals to make changes to behaviours that promote wellbeing and independence. This solution creates empowered health-literate individuals who are confident to live with their condition rather than seeing it as dealing with an illness. Health Coaching is proven to help increase an individual’s independence through improved health literacy – the understanding of, and ability to be more in control of, one’s own condition and state of health.

Emma-Jane French comments: “We began this innovation because we believe that the health literate patient is the future. These people become skilled in shared decision making, taking into account what matters to them, increasing their self-management skill level and having a better engagement with healthcare resources. All of which support the patient and family in living with the condition”. As people’s ability to self-manage themselves grows, the dependency on services such as GP services, hospital services, and other services decrease.

Tom Cropper
Director of My Clinical Coach and Chief Operating Officer Totally Health

The service is personal and within 48 hours can reach large numbers of individuals, and is proven to help increase independence through improved health literacy – the understanding of, and ability to be more in control of, one’s own condition and state of health.

Emma-Jane French, Managing Director My Clinical Coach and Chief Operating Officer Totally Health

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manage their health increases, their risk of chronic disease will reduce and so too will their need for unscheduled NHS use. Enabled, informed, confident and health literate patients have been shown to require fewer emergency appointments, in General Practice and Emergency Departments.

Totally Health and My Clinical Coach

Totally Health is a national award-winning Clinical Health Coaching service. Totally Health, the leading provider of Clinical Health Coaching via the NHS, was launched 4 years ago. It was the first shared decision making coaching to the NHS to offer a nurse-led service conducted remotely to enable patients to take control of their individual health journey, working alongside their conventional medical care.

There have been over 1300 referrals into the service so far from as far away as central France and over the UK from Hartppool down to Somerset. CCGs can commission the Health Coaching as a white-label service. So far, where Totally Health has been commissioned by CCGs, they have seen impressive results – a 72% reduction in patients’ need for emergency appointments and A&E attendances and a 59% reduction in need for GP appointments. Wendy Norton, Director of Clinical Operations and Head of the Health Coaching team, said: “The potential benefits of this new service are very strong, with results showing that following a programme of Clinical Health Coaching, 96% of patients felt more knowledgeable about their condition, 100% of patients felt more confident about being able to manage their condition, and 96% of patients felt motivated to make behavioural changes such as: smoking cessation, more exercise, medication compliance.”

Totally Health acknowledged that Clinical Health Coaching was not widely available on the NHS, and took this innovation and launched recently the “first of its kind” subscription Health Coaching service, known as My Clinical Coach, where a patient can access the same service privately through a self-subscription portal at www.myclinicalcoach.com. My Clinical Coach transforms care for these patients, giving people direct access to tailored care delivered by a personal Health Coach – an NHS trained nurse – to transform their health from as little as £1 per day.

Solution: Just a Phone Call Away

Totally Health and My Clinical Coach are pioneering an innovative way in which millions of patients in the UK with long term health conditions can manage their own health independently and effectively. They recognise the growing number of patients not having access to clinical health coaching locally and the reliance being placed on already overburdened urgent GP and hospital services.

Long term conditions have a ripple effect as they affect not just the individual with the condition, but the family, friends and carers.

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( COPD), diabetes and heart disease. It is available for individuals over 18 years old but the majority are over 45.

The diagnosis of a long term health condition can be daunting. However, there is a wealth of information and services available to these patients, but often the choice is too overwhelming and their existing healthcare providers do not have the time to provide detailed and personalised one-to-one support. Telephone clinical health coaching is an effective and practical means of accessing support for patients with long term conditions. Delivered over the phone at a time and place convenient to patients, it can provide an increased sense of control by eliminating some of the barriers and intimidations that are often present during physical interactions with healthcare staff, resulting in higher levels of engagement, educating and empowering patients and better outcomes from the coaching process.

A GP or practice nurse can put a patient in touch with a health coach after diagnosis. Alternatively, a patient can now refer themselves directly into our service. Specially trained nurses are then assigned to an individual and with that continuity they are able to build up a relationship of trust. The nurse and patient talk via scheduled telephone health coaching sessions (1 x week, but that can be increased or decreased according to the individual and personal circumstances), and the coaching provides an evidence-based and targeted structure while being simultaneously matched to the individual patient’s needs and agenda, so providing a safe environment for the patient to talk about any questions they may have. The anonymous nature means the patient feels safe in disclosing fears and may open up where they haven’t before (safe in the knowledge that they will never bump into their coach in the street).

Clinical health coaching is a proactive rather than reactive service that aims to help individuals stay one step ahead of a crisis and teach them how to respond before an emergency arises, and thus helps prevent A&E admissions. The nurses coach holistically to promote a healthier lifestyle, a better state of wellness and, ultimately, a better quality of life, creating health and wellbeing through true patient health literacy.

My Clinical Coach offers a variety of membership packages to support individuals in managing their health and ensures that every programme is tailored to help people manage their disease at each different stage. The clinically focused and patient-centred service provides patients with 12 months of tailored one-to-one telephone health coaching from an NHS trained nurse, followed by a 6-month maintenance programme. There are three main packages available to patients using the service, a Regular and Premier package as well as a Wellness package for those whose diagnosis is unclear but who feel they may benefit from coaching.

Patients are free to call as often as needed and My Clinical Coach nurses will arrange the phone calls, following an assessment with the patient to allow the clinical health coach to tailor the support to the patient and their condition. The service aims to support people with their everyday experiences of the condition, preparing patients to manage their treatments effectively and make lifestyle changes to increase activity and vitality. The Premier service offers extended evening hours and Saturday mornings.

Totally Health created this service to support people who cannot access clinical health coaching services through their local NHS or CCG, who wish to enrol directly. It enables patients to manage their own health better to avoid reliance on urgent GP and hospital services and to support the NHS to meet its targets by providing patients with the option to access high quality out of hospital care, as an additional support network.

The NHS Five Year Forward View notes that “long term conditions are now a central task of the NHS”. Caring for these needs requires a partnership with patients over the longer term rather than providing simple, unconnected “episodes” of care. Totally Health and My Clinical Coach have created a service to transform health and well-being by changing the emphasis from: “What’s the matter?” to: “What matters to you?”. This means moving away from a paternalistic and dependent consultation model of “fixing” to one that is empowering, which increases patient self-management skills, independence, confidence, compliance and healthy Behaviours.

Our clinical health coaching services are available direct to your patients through My Clinical Coach or white-labelled via your own NHS offering, through Totally Health.
Long term conditions have a ripple effect as they affect not just the individual with the condition, but the family, friends and carers which are all needed to improve outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

It is widely acknowledged in the medical profession that for patients with these types of long term conditions, having a greater understanding of their condition can empower patients to make more informed decisions about medication, lifestyle and other treatment options. My Clinical Coach expert nurse coaches have a wealth of clinical experience and know how to provide patients with the education, support and motivation needed to cope with a diagnosis and manage a condition in the longer term. And, as all our nurses have been trained and worked in the NHS, patients are assured that My Clinical Coach follows existing health care pathways and complements the care that they will already receive through the NHS.

Key Messages
1. Clinical health coaching creates health and wellbeing for patients. The coaching creates health-literate patients who are confident, knowledgeable and who are in control of their condition. Health-literate patients take back control of their own lives. Their appropriate self-management reduces the need for help from the NHS.
2. The solution is the foundation on which other services should sit. The health coaching is a wide-reaching solution rather than a narrowly-focused one. It doesn’t replace medical care but works alongside it as a support and educational resource.
3. Potential financial benefits to the NHS: in 2013 it was estimated that £7 out of every £10 spent on health and social care in England was spent to support people with at least one long term condition.
4. Totally Health and My Clinical Coach can help now whether you are a patient or a commissioner. The model is scalable and can be implemented within 48 hours for a patient.

Patient Story
Barrie is 79 years old with a number of medical conditions. 12 years ago he had a triple bypass; 2 years ago he had part of a kidney removed when it was discovered he had a form of cancer. More recently he had a hip replacement operation, and during a pre-op appointment an irregular heart beat was discovered, this led to anticoagulation treatment. He struggled to comprehend the implications with only a limited time with his GP and other health professionals. Barrie was signed up to the My Clinical Coach service and now has regular calls with his personal nurse who helps him understand his condition, his medication and what measures he can take to look after himself better. She put his mind at ease over medical issues and has encouraged him to incorporate healthy eating and fitness habits into his lifestyle. Only 12 weeks on from his hip operation and Barrie was back on his feet and enjoying walks, swimming and even sailing! Barrie would definitely recommend health coaching to others and says “It is because your personal nurse puts your mind at rest and lets you spend your time getting on with living rather than worrying about ill health”.

National Recognition
WINNER: November 2016: Clinical Team of the Year (Diabetes); The General Practice Awards
FINALIST: November 2016: Clinical Team of the Year (Long Term Conditions); The General Practice Awards
SPECIAL COMMENDATION: October 2016: Pathway Innovation of the Year; National Association of Primary Care
WINNER: November 2014; Clinical Team of the Year (Respiratory); The General Practice Awards
WINNER: November 2014: Excellence in Healthcare Collaborations and Partnerships; PMEA

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The Rise of Long Term Conditions

Tom Cropper, Editor

As we live longer the number of people living with long term medical conditions is on the rise.

Modern healthcare is, in some ways, a victim of its own success. While advancements have greatly increased our ability to fight disease and prolong life, they also create a huge pressure on resources. With people living longer, increasing numbers must live with complex and long term conditions. This, combined with lifestyle changes such as reduced exercise and growing obesity levels, means the NHS must find ways to treat these people for prolonged periods of time. Doing so in a way which is affordable and maximises quality of life is complex.

The Rise in Long Term Conditions

The number of people dying from COPD has risen by 60% in 20 years. It is the only main cause of death which is on the increase and, without interventions to cut risk, death rates could increase a further 30% in the next ten years. By 2030 it is predicted to become the world’s third leading cause of death.

Diabetes is also on the rise. Figures from Diabetes UK suggest the number of people in the UK living with the condition has breached the 4million mark.

Why They Are on the Rise

The number of people living with long term medical conditions is complex. Making this deliberate balancing act requires the NHS to harness the power of multiple providers and commissioners to deliver timely alerts if anything goes wrong. Smart skin patches, for example, use sensors to monitor blood sugar levels and send a message to the patient’s smartphone if they start to reach dangerous levels.

Telephone coaching services can also provide education and information to help patients manage their conditions. Trained nurses can provide information about treatment options, or behavioural changes which can reduce a patient’s chances of experiencing complications with a condition.

To address the rise in long term conditions, the NHS must harness the power of multiple services to deliver care in a more proactive manner. They must work hard to understand the underlying causes behind conditions, and be able to assess the success of any new systems they bring in. Need drives innovation, which will see the NHS looking at new ways of working. However, care must be taken to ensure that innovation delivers the gains needed.
Self-management is about empowering patients and carers with the information they need to change behaviour and take action which can alleviate their conditions.

YOU DON’T need to look too far before you read news of GP practices in crisis. Demand is rising, but funding is being cut. The NHS is desperately looking for solutions which can alleviate the strain on GP practices around the country, while still delivering improved care services. One of the more popular ideas has revolved around self-management.

A Growing Strategy
Self-management has been a key part of NHS strategy since the introduction of the Expert Patient Programme in 2002. This began as a Department of Health Research Project and grew to become a thriving Community Interest Company (CIC). It gives people more control over their condition through cognitive therapy courses.

“It’s giving patients more control,” said Chief Executive Renata Drinkwater in 2013. “Courses like these are proven to make a difference. They boost confidence and, in some cases, can delay the onset of other conditions. They also have other benefits like reducing the amount of times the patient needs to go into hospital or use Accident and Emergency.”

According to a case study published by the Department of Health, the programme has either delivered, or enabled other providers to deliver, more than 5,000 EPP courses to more than 70,000 participants.

Self-management is about empowering patients and carers with the information they need to change behaviour and take action which can alleviate their conditions. This can be through support at a surgery, telephone coaching, online information, the running of courses or any other avenue which helps to increase patient education.

Its use has grown as the link between our behaviour, lifestyles and health have become ever more apparent. Conditions such as diabetes are on the rise driven in part by bad health and lifestyle choices. With just a little information about the management of conditions and healthier life choices, it is hoped the NHS can reduce significantly the strain on resources while also improving patient outcomes and experience.

How Self-Management Can Help
There are many examples about how self-managing conditions can help. For example, tech entrepreneur Mohammad Al Ubaydli tells how one doctor’s near miss inspired him to create a service which gives patients a view of their own medical records.

“The idea came from the story of a US doctor called ‘Leela’,” he explains. “A patient identified a problem that had been overlooked in his original report. Had it been left untreated it could have led to cancer. From then on he resisted his patients had access to their medical records.”

The story shows that, in some cases, patients can be better placed than doctors to oversee their own medical records. Doctors are overworked and it’s not always possible for them to spot every single problem. Patients, though, can devote more time to their specific results and, while they may not have the expertise to identify which the information tells them, they will be able to flag up to a doctor anything they are unsure about.

Mohammad Al Ubaydli’s solution is a service called Patients Know Best which provides patients with access to their own medical information and allows them to connect with medical experts from around the world. It is more of an information service than self-management, but it does highlight the benefits that greater patient empowerment can bring.

Getting Access to Support
In a recent report, the Kings Fund identified self-management as one of ten priorities for the future of the health service. It cited figures from the Department of Health in 2005, which suggest that between 70% and 80% of people with long term conditions can be empowered to manage their conditions themselves.

They state that self-management has the potential to improve health outcomes with a number of patients reporting increases in physical function. It can also improve patient experience and confidence as well as reducing unplanned hospital admissions and helping patients adhere to treatment and medication plans.

The impact on NHS purse strings could be considerable. As the Kings Fund Report illustrates, approximately 15 million people live with long term chronic conditions – a figure which is growing. They account for 50% of all GP appointments and 70% of in patient bed days. Chronic disease treatment accounts for 70% of the primary and acute care budget in England and Wales. Meanwhile in the USA a cost analysis showed that expenditure in other parts of healthcare could be reduced by better self-management provision.

How to Change
The problem is that, nearly 15 years on from the Expert Patient Programme, progress in self-management has been relatively slow. It is still very much in its infancy with considerable debate about the precise level of impact it can have.

Clinical coaching is still seen as a developmental idea with access dependant on the attitude of the NHS Trust.

Some have been ahead of the curve such as Health Education East of England which, in 2013, extended a scheme of health coaching training which had started in Suffolk a couple of years earlier. Evaluations of the projects have so far been positive with medical staff being trained to deliver clear clinical coaching to patients which can help them with self-care and behavioural change.

According to Martin McShane, NHS England Director, such projects serve as a signpost for the future.

“Rather than having care which is condition specific we need care that is person specific,” he says. “This requires a radical change in the nature of the consultation between professionals and individuals with long term conditions so that they are empowered and supported to manage their own care.”

Adoption is Uneven
Others, though, have been less progressive, which means that, depending on location, patients may not have access to adequate clinical training or advice. Those effects can be felt more keenly in deprived areas and among people on lower incomes, as they are statistically more likely to suffer complications and early death.

Many of these issues can be avoided with better education, simple changes to behaviour and a greater awareness of their condition. The NHS needs to take self-management support services from their infancy to become truly mainstream.

One solution can come through telephone coaching. Experts can deliver high quality advice and support to patients over the phone. It doesn’t matter where they live or what the attitude of their local NHS Trust might be – the service is there for them to use when they need it. As these services grow and mature, they are developing an increasing body of evidence to illustrate their impact. In the next article in this Report we will see how they are delivering value and what they can offer in the future.
Clinical coaching services are on the rise and they are proving successful in helping people manage their conditions more effectively.

**Clinical coaching services**

Clinical coaching services are on the rise and they are proving successful in helping people manage their conditions more effectively. The concept has been around for many years and has been deployed in countries such as the USA, Australia and elsewhere. A study from the British Medical Journal identified a direct correlation between the use of services such as clinical coaching and a reduction in hospital admissions. It found that a three-year programme led to a reduction of approximately two thirds in unscheduled COPD admissions.

Clinical coaching services are on the rise and they are proving successful in helping people manage their conditions more effectively. The aim is simple: to use a service to provide ongoing training and counselling to help patients manage their own healthcare needs more effectively. By helping people to make small changes in their behaviour and giving them more knowledge about their condition they can significantly improve patients’ quality of life.

**The Impact of Long Term Conditions**

Long term conditions have an impact well beyond the original diagnosis. They can reduce quality of life, give rise to other conditions, and affect general wellbeing. It’s not only the individual who suffers; friends, family and carers can also feel the effects. For example, someone may be overly obese. This condition, in turn, can lead to heart problems, mobility issues or Type 2 diabetes. The strain will be felt not only by the individual, but by those closer to him or her who must cope with daily condition management.

A study from the Kings Fund and the Centre for Medical Health in 2012 rated the additional costs associated with long-term conditions at between £54bn and £12bn per year. However, many of the associated costs could be reduced if the NHS were to manage the mental health requirements of those patients more effectively.

**Clinical Coaching**

One answer may lie in the realm of clinical coaching. The concept has been around for many years and has been deployed in countries such as the USA, Australia and elsewhere. A study from the British Medical Journal identified a direct correlation between the use of services such as clinical coaching and a reduction in hospital admissions. It found that a three-year programme led to a reduction of approximately two thirds in unscheduled COPD admissions.

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**Coaching in Action**

Take the example of Mitch, a 29-year-old who suffered from appendicitis. After being sent home from surgery with medicine to manage the symptoms he continued to struggle with pain. “Over the course of 24 hours I was struggling with the pain and wasn’t sure what to do about this or how to manage it,” he explained. “It was over a weekend and I just wanted someone to talk to without bothering my doctors, if it was something I could manage at home.”

He used a service called My Clinical Coach which provided telephone based clinical coaching to help him manage the condition more effectively.

“With the support of my health coach over a number of calls, I was able to get on top of my pain with the medications that I was sent home with,” he adds. “I learnt about signs and symptoms to watch for in case I developed an infection. We discussed wound care and how quickly I could expect to get back on my feet.”

The service gives its customers access to expert advice and support from teams of trained nurses and medical experts over the phone. They serve as an additional arm of support for doctors who can refer patients to the service, or patients can self-refer themselves. Feedback from patients suggests they value both the practical feedback and emotional support these experts can provide to help them manage their condition.

The service costs £35.99 for the regular package and £39.99 for the premium package. Patients can call in as many times as they like and speak to their own dedicated nurse ensuring they receive ongoing advice and support from the same individual. Their premier service offers extended weekend and evening hours so people can get help when they need it most.

**Managing Multiple Conditions**

Another story comes from Blaine who is living with a number of different conditions. 12 years ago, he had a triple bypass and in 2014 he had part of his kidney removed when he was diagnosed with a form of cancer. He relies on his sister – a trained pharmacist – for advice, but when My Clinical Coach became available, she referred him to the service.

He has a dedicated nurse who calls him at times previously agreed to help monitor his condition. Equally, he can call in at any time of the day to get advice as and when he needs it. “She calls me at times I agree with her and I can call her whenever I need some guidance or simply have a question,” he explains. “You know the type of question you feel silly about asking, as if you are a burden, when you book an appointment to ask your GP.”

**Maintaining Quality of Life**

The service has helped him to maintain his active quality of life. Three months later he was able to restart his passion for sailing and managed to complete a race. He has also been walking and swimming in France and has recaptured much of his previously active lifestyle. The impacts are felt not only in improved health management, but also in his quality of life, which further impacts those around him.

In addition, he can access quick support for small issues which he can manage himself without intervention from a doctor. As such he does not have to visit a GP and take up valuable time and resources with relatively minor matters. This is therefore a service which not only improves the lives of patients, but can also reduce the impact on GP services and the NHS as a whole.

The market for clinical health coaching services is growing, as are the number of services set up to deliver this service. Even so, to date it hasn’t only scratched the surface of what can be achieved. The benefits of telephone based clinical coaching is that it’s not location dependent. Patients can access the service at any time from wherever they are based. As awareness grows among clinicians and patients alike, so too does the value they can offer the health service.
Why Empowering Patients is Crucial to the Future of the NHS

Tom Cropper, Editor

As the NHS looks to cope with the challenging demands of the future, it will seek to greatly empower its patients.

Whenever you read or hear about the NHS, its future appears uncertain. How can it manage when the demands placed on services are growing faster than its funds? The answer is to become more streamlined, agile and flexible. Great emphasis is being placed on those innovations which reduce the impact on the system while also maintaining the standard of services and quality of patient life.

Future Challenges of the NHS

Whatever one’s opinion about the NHS, there is no denying the size of the task. Financially, the NHS is close to breaking point. Savings are coming too slowly and reform does not go far enough.

A study from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability has suggested that the NHS will exceed its budget to the tune of £10bn a year* by 2020, as it plans to find £22bn in planned efficiency savings. The current long term plan of the NHS, the Five Year Forward Review in 2014, the £8.4bn in additional funding announced by the government was simply being used to plug short term gaps. The message from this report and others is clear - the Department of Health, based on self-management, said the report, was already outdated with new pressures emerging even in the short time since the NHS developed its Five Year Forward Review in 2014. The £8.4bn in additional funding announced by the government was simply being used to plug short term gaps.

Assessing the future nature of challenges can be difficult and some of the data is mixed. The Department of Health, based on self-reported health, suggests the number of long term conditions could remain relatively stable. However, according to the Kings Fund, an analysis of individual conditions suggests that the number is growing and so too are the number of people with complex or multiple conditions. Managing these more effectively and in a way which reduces the impact on health services will be a big part of forward strategy.

A Focus on Self-Management

Much of the attention will fall on self-management. Health and social care services are eager to employ strategies which empower patients to take as much of a role in the choice and treatment of their care as possible. Not only can this save money, but it is hoped that their independence and quality of life will be significantly improved.

In this respect, it appears to be a golden bullet solution – one which can reduce the impact on the health service while also improving patient care.

In its plan for the future, NHS England states: “Our system, designed for the 20th century, has to change and adapt to meet the challenges of the future. By listening to the experiences and feedback from people coping with LTCs it is evident that the individual needs to become central to how care is designed and implemented. Personalised care which understands and supports the individual is vital.” It focuses on what it calls the House of Care in which person-centred and coordinated care sits at the heart of the structure. This will include a major component of self-managed care.

For all these innovations, however, patients want and need interaction with human clinicians. Chatbot technology is evolving to produce a more human-like communication experience with patients, but real expert support will still be crucial. Accordingly, the growing number of clinical coaching services will play a crucial role.

Personal Services

These provide direct clinical coaching via the telephone. They enable patients to get advice, medical and emotional support from trained medical experts. Services are developed to ensure a patient can speak with the same expert who will understand more about their condition. The popularity of these services is growing as patients become more aware and doctors become more willing to make referrals.

They aim to achieve many of the key goals of the NHS – delivering care which is more person-centred, in a flexible manner which patients can access from their own homes. They can potentially lighten the load on hospitals and GP practices resulting in cost and efficiency savings. They also allow patients to answer questions quickly and simply without taking up the valuable time of GPs. This helps them become experts in their own care, which leads to fewer emergencies, a better quality of life and, in many cases, longer life expectancy.

Success for the future lies in not one – but many – innovations. Self-management and person-centred care will play an important role as the NHS seeks to become more fluid, flexible and streamlined.
IMPROVING SELF-MANAGEMENT FOR PATIENTS WITH LONG TERM CONDITIONS AND THE ROLE OF TELEPHONE HEALTH COACHING

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