



ARC East Midlands

Improving diabetes care: A new approach in primary care



Managing type 2 diabetes is a major challenge for the NHS, both for patient health and healthcare costs. Most people with type 2 diabetes are now cared for in GP surgeries, and new ways of organising care could help save money and improve outcomes. This study compared the costs of a new, enhanced diabetes service in primary care with the standard way of providing care.

What was the aim of the project?

The aim of this study was to find out if the enhanced primary care diabetes service costs less per patient than standard care in most GP practices, without reducing the quality of care.



What did we do?

Researchers compared eight large GP practices in Leicester using the enhanced diabetes care model with similar practices providing standard care. They collected cost data from both groups and used statistical methods to estimate the average cost per patient with diabetes in each model of care.

How did we involve people?

The study used real patient data from GP practices in Leicester. The enhanced care model involved a team approach, including GPs, nurses and diabetes specialists working together to support patients. The analysis was based on costs from actual patient care in these practices.

What did we learn?

The enhanced primary care model was significantly cheaper, costing about £83 less per patient per year than standard care. If this model was used across the UK, it could save the NHS around £276 million each year. The savings are likely due to better organisation and economies of scale, without reducing the quality of care.

What next?

The model has now been successfully expanded to cover the entire Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area and is currently being adapted and adopted in other Integrated Care Systems across the country. Ongoing research, funded by NIHR ARC East Midlands, is evaluating the service locally to inform continuous improvement and ensure it continues to meet patient needs while remaining cost-effective.

What is NIHR ARC East Midlands?

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) East Midlands is one of the 15 NIHR ARCs. NIHR ARC East Midlands works collaboratively with partners and patient groups to bring the best applied health and care evidence into practice. For more information, visit www.arc-em.nihr.ac.uk.

Evidence

Seidu, S., Gillies, C., Farooqi, A., Trivedi, H., Than, T., Brady, E., Davies, M.J. & Khunti, K. (2021) 'A cost comparison of an enhanced primary care diabetes service and standard care', *Primary Care Diabetes*, 15(3), pp. 601–606. doi: [10.1016/j.pcd.2020.10.011](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pcd.2020.10.011).

Stay up to date with all 15 ARCs:

🖱️ tinyurl.com/NIHRARCs

✂️ @NIHRARCs

✉️ arcs@nihr.ac.uk