



Self Care Week, 14-20 November 2011

# Communications Pack:

## Voluntary Organisations

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**What is Self Care Week 2011?** A national awareness week which focuses on “helping people to take care of themselves” by taking control of their own health and wellbeing by finding out about the information and support that already exists to help them self care. This year’s Week is building on the success of Self Care Week in 2009 and 2010.

**Why hold another Self Care Week?** Self Care Week 2009 and 2010 were a great success and feedback showed that people were keen to run another awareness Week. Many organisations felt it was a great way to raise the profile of the services they offer to people to help them look after their own health and wellbeing. This year, the Department has asked the Self Care Forum ([www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org)) to co-ordinate arrangements for the week, so that there is much wider buy-in from stakeholders. The Forum is made up of a number of individuals and organisations, including DH, PAGB, RCN, NAPP, National Voices, NAPC, NHS Alliance and Men’s Health Forum who are all committed to embedding self care in all walks of life.

**Why run the week now?** This is a good time to raise awareness of what people can be doing to take care of themselves better, particularly those with long term conditions. The time leading up to the Winter months can prepare and inform the whole population about how they can take care of themselves better when seasonal illness tends to be more prolific.

**Who is being targeted?** The primary focus is on the public, people with a long term condition and their carers. The campaign will also include key messages for health and social care staff.

### **How can your organisation support the campaign?**

Many organisations are already supporting the week by taking the opportunity to launch specific initiatives around Self Care or using the week to link with seasonal health messages. Not everyone will be able to do this but simply doing some or all of the activities below will help to raise the profile of the week.

- Publish articles in your public and staff facing newsletters and websites.
- Post on your internal and public-facing websites the Self Care week online button or banner, link to [www.nhs.uk/selfcare](http://www.nhs.uk/selfcare), and circulate to other contacts
- Tailor, print off and display posters in public and staff areas
- Mention Self Care Week 2011 in presentations and speeches
- Get in touch with local health or social care services to see if you can team up on awareness raising activity
- Run an awareness session – coffee morning for patients to talk about how self care can help them to manage their condition.
- Launch your own Self Care initiative and invite local media to take part such as a cough/cold and flu campaign aimed at the general public and those vulnerable to these viruses
- Make sure your Chief Executive is aware of the activity
- Create resources for local journalists
- Or just promote Self Care Week 2011 on your communications channels and link to [www.nhs.uk/selfcare](http://www.nhs.uk/selfcare) or your own self care website

**Are there any resources available?** You will be able to download the following resources from the DH and Self Care Forum websites:

- Web buttons
- Banner
- Posters
- Presentation master slide
- Sample article

- Range of **FREE** public-facing leaflets with messages relevant to Self Care Week and how to order them

**NEW FOR THIS YEAR** – a self-care ‘message of the day’ for you to add to your website, facebook page, twitter stream or send out as text messages as suits you.

**Measuring the impact of your activity** – We will be undertaking a review of the impact of Self Care Week activity and we urge everyone to do the same.

If you have the resources, you may like to commission an agency to carry out research into the campaign’s impact on patients and staff. If you carried out activity jointly with a local voluntary/community organisation, you may choose to undertake evaluation work together.

### **Ideas for low cost evaluation**

- Use an online survey provider such as SurveyMonkey to ask target audiences how the campaign has impacted on them
- Search the internet for local campaign press coverage
- Keep track of the number of posters, leaflets, etc that have been distributed
- Monitor take up of any services/ initiatives launched
- For online content, find out the number of page views and click throughs

Please share your evaluations with us at [www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org)

**What else is happening in Self Care week?** Self Care Week will be launched at the PAGB/RCGP/RCN/NAPP Self-Care Conference on 8th November at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London when the RCGP eLearning self-care aware consultation module for clinicians to help their patients take care of themselves. Professional trade organisations such as the RCGP, PAGB and the RCN will spread the word about self care to their members. There will be media activity to encourage coverage of Self Care week in national media, professional/trade press, consumer magazines . A number of charities and organisations have agreed to support the Week by launching relevant self care initiatives and running public facing events such as Men’s Health Forum and Expert Patient Programme. NHS Choices will be promoting the Week across their website. Expert Patient Programme will be running local events with local partners

**What happened locally for Self Care Week 2010?** There was encouraging support for the campaign across health, social care and voluntary sector organisations – here is just a flavour of the sort of activity:

- Cornwall & Isles of Scilly PCT and Cornwall County Council ran an event with local MPs re strengthening partnership to support the growing number of people with a long term illness
- NHS Barnsley & Doncaster LINK ran an event around vascular disease to raise awareness of local support services
- Culm Valley Integrated Centre for Health ran a “Health QuestionTime” with doctors and other experts answering questions and managing tiredness and fatigue
- North West SHA had a region wide strategy including: a local push on care plans and medicines review an engagement strategy with patients and carers through web technology; a Self Care blog and twitter; worked with local community groups and pharmacies across the region; and linked with the North West “Choose Well” campaign.

**Keep us informed** It would be great to hear what you did to support the week and to send us photographs or local press cuttings. Please email us through the Self Care Forum

# The Theme for 2011 is Technology Supports Self Care

The following key messages can be tailored to suit your communications activity:

## Self Care Messages about Technology:

- Technology is changing the way we manage our health.
- Mobile phone apps help people to manage their weight, diet and exercise as well as learn more about health related issues and conditions
- Information from the internet can support self care and self management
- Education and low level interventions are available on-line
- Assisted living aids can help maintain independence and stay safe at home
- Consultations can take place via video link to save time and unnecessary travel in rural areas
- Telehealth monitoring equipment for people with complex conditions enables them to stay at home, but still stay in touch with their health professionals
- On-line support groups help to prevent social isolation

## Self Care Messages for the Wider Public

- Self Care is about taking control of your own health and well being
- Self Care is how you avoid becoming ill, treat common, everyday illnesses, take medicines and seek help when you need it as well as keeping fit and healthy
- People with long term conditions spend on average 6 hours a year with a healthcare professional the rest of the time they take care of themselves
- Learning to take care of your health is a good thing – puts you in control, improves your quality of life and helps you live more healthily
- There is lots of information and support available to help you to do this
- NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk/selfcare](http://www.nhs.uk/selfcare) contains useful information on self care support and links to information on specific health conditions, from commonly occurring symptoms to long term conditions
- Your local pharmacist can give you help and advice about your health and well being, and about treating commonly occurring symptoms such as cough, cold, indigestion, muscle aches and pains, which most of us suffer during the year. Your pharmacist's advice can be even more useful if you have a long term condition
- Speak to your local pharmacist, GP or practice nurse about how they can help you take control

## Self Care Messages for People with long term conditions and carers

- Self Care is about taking control of your own health and well being
- Self Care is how you treat minor ailments, take medicines and seek help when you need it as well as keeping fit and healthy
- People with a long term condition spend on average 6 hours a year with a healthcare professional, the rest of the time they need to take care of themselves
- People with a long term condition have learned to be experts in their own care but some of us don't understand our condition or know why we take medicines when we do
- Learning to manage your condition is a good thing – puts you in control, improves your quality of life and helps you stay healthy

- There is lots of information and support available to help you to do this.
- Talk to your healthcare professional and pharmacist about the services and support available to help you live with your condition
- Your pharmacist can offer a number of NHS services to help you get the most out of your medicines and support healthy living
- Discussions with your healthcare professional can result in a care plan that focuses on the things that matter to you
- There are lots of equipment to help manage your condition to allow you to live independently and stay healthy
- NHS Choices website [www.nhs.uk/selfcare](http://www.nhs.uk/selfcare) contains useful information on self care support and links to information on specific health conditions.

# Self Care Facts and Stats

Here are some facts and statistics which can be included in all articles, when carrying out communications activity They will bring the story to life and remind people of the scale of the challenges for people and healthcare professionals.

*Self Care: An Ethical Imperative*, the report launched by the Self Care Campaign in March 2010, highlights that common disturbances to normal good health, such as coughs and colds, are accounting for 20% of GP workload or on average 1 hour a day for every GP

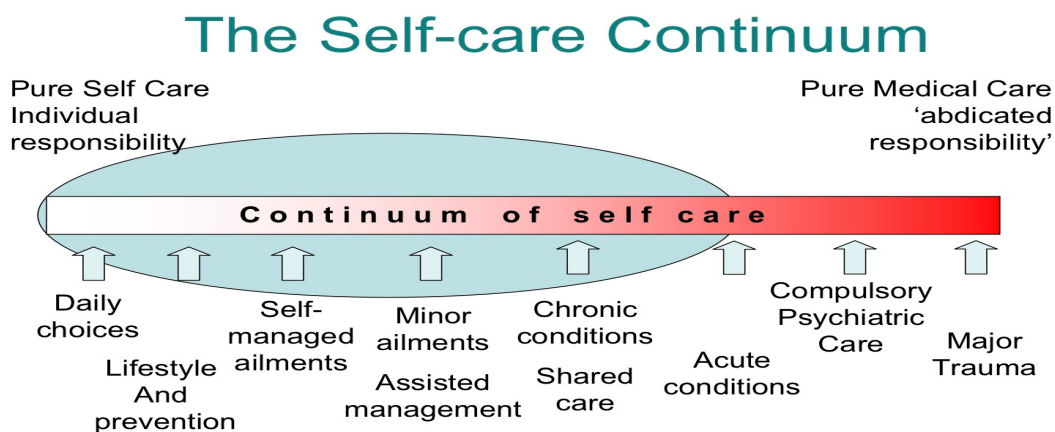
- 57 million GP consultations every year involve minor ailments which can be handled through self-care. 51.4m of these consultations are for minor ailments alone
- Almost 50 per cent of these consultations are generated by 16 – 59 year olds and yet the elderly and children need the service most
- A common cold can last for up to 21 days yet only 4% of people would continue to self-treat for 15 – 28 days
- Evidence shows that they stop self-medicating much earlier than they need to:
  - 14% of people would continue with self-treatment for 1 – 3 days
  - 32% of people will self treat for 4 – 7 days
  - 15% would continue for 14 days
  - 4% for 15 – 28 days
- There are around 15 million people in England with a long term condition
- Stroke affects more than 110,000 people in England each year, which costs the NHS over £2.8 billion
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease causes 30,000 deaths a year in England and Wales alone, with the cost of care to the NHS around £818m
- 700,000 people in the UK have dementia, and this is expected to double in a generation, due to our ageing population
- Demographic projections outline a 252% rise in the number of people aged over 65 by 2050
- Around 170,000 people die prematurely in England each year in total, with main causes being cancers, circulatory diseases and respiratory conditions
- Long-term conditions are strongly linked to health inequalities: morbidity associated with limiting LTC is very much higher in many ethnic and lower socioeconomic groups
- The Commonwealth Fund 2008 survey states that only 45% of people in the UK with long term conditions are routinely encouraged by clinicians to ask questions about their condition
- Only 48% state that they are routinely involved in decisions about their care or support. These figures do not change year on year
- A 2005 MORI survey showed that more than 90% of patients with a long term condition were interested in taking a more active role in their care. 75% stated that they would be more confident to self care if they had help from a healthcare professional or peer

- People with long term conditions are the most frequent users of health services and account for 55% of all GP appointments, 68% of outpatients and A&E appointments, 77% of all inpatient bed days and around 70% of total health and social care spend
- The national GP survey indicates that around 83% of people with an long term condition report they had a discussion with their health professional about how to manage their condition and 72% believe their views were taken notice of. As a result the same survey reports that 70% of people with a long term condition believe their care has improved
- Supporting self care effectively can reduce the impact on care services, for example reducing visits to GPs by 40%, A&E visits by up to 50% and potentially halving the hospital lengths of stay
- Patients with long term conditions are intensive users of health care services. Those with long term conditions account for 31% of the population, but use 52% of all GP appointments and 65% of all outpatient appointments. It is estimated that the treatment and care of those with long term conditions accounts for 69% of the primary and acute care budget in England
- It is estimated that the treatment and care of people with long term conditions account for 70% of the total health and social care spend in England, or almost £7 in every £10 spent

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is self care?

Self care is an integral part of daily life and is all about individuals taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, with support from the people involved in their care and in conjunction with care received from health and social care professionals. Self care includes the actions people take every day in order to stay fit and maintain good physical and mental health, meet their social and psychological needs, prevent illness or accidents and care more effectively for minor ailments and long term conditions. People living with a long term condition can benefit enormously from being supported to self care. They can live longer, suffer less pain, anxiety, depression and fatigue, have a better quality of life, and be more active and independent. Dr Pete Smith, NAPC, and Self Care Forum Board member describes self-care as the following continuum:



## What is self care support?

Its about supporting people in the decisions they make to manage their long term condition. It is also about offering individuals the right information and support at the right time , and empowering them to take a more active role in their health and wellbeing in order to improve their quality of life.

## What is a long term condition?

A long term condition is one which cannot presently be cured but can be managed with treatment and/or therapy. Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), coronary heart disease, depression, diabetes, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, mental health and stroke are examples of common long term conditions.

## What are the consequences of long term conditions?

Having a long term condition can significantly reduce a person's quality of life, often resulting in simple daily activities which many people take for granted, being difficult or impossible to undertake. Long term conditions affect around 15 million people in England and some live with more than one long term condition. Such conditions can often reduce dependence and mobility, making patients increasingly dependent on a broad range of health and social care services in their community as well as on their carers, families, friends and neighbours



## How are long term conditions managed?

Proactive management can make a real difference to patients with a single or range of long term conditions that affect their health and wellbeing. Improving disease management is essential to producing better health outcomes, slowing disease progression, reducing disability and ensuring better management of the sudden deteriorations often associated with long term conditions, which will result in improved quality of life for patients and reduce hospital admissions.

## What is the NHS doing to help improve the lives of people with long term conditions?

People with long term conditions consistently tell us they do not want to be in hospital unless it is absolutely necessary and then only as part of a planned approach. They want to be involved in decision making about their care and have access to information to help them make those decisions.

The generic long term conditions strategy uses a risk prediction approach to identify those people who are the most regular users of hospital services (and are at risk of re-admissions), then stratify them according to complexity of need and commission services to meet those needs. It is an approach that works equally for people with single diseases or multiple co-morbidities. It is equally effective when used for physical and mental health issues and is applicable to people of all age groups including the frail elderly. In essence, the model stratifies the local population into three levels :

- **Case management** – dedicated one to one support from a highly skilled health professional (e.g. a community matron) with regular face to face contact
- **Personalised care planning** – placing the person at the centre of decision making about their care and agreeing a plan of how that care will be delivered
- **Support people to self care** – providing people with information and skills to make day to day decisions about the way they manage their health. This has included developing the Expert Patients Programme through the Community Interest Company with whom we maintain a close relationship

The model also includes using the emerging telecare and telehealth technology and telephone coaching arrangements to support people to remain independent for as long as possible.

## What is personalised care planning?

Personalised care planning is about involving people with long term conditions in decisions about their care, engaging them in discussions about their goals and aims for the way they want to live their lives. Then agreeing a plan of how their health care will be managed. It aims to address an individual's full range of needs, taking into account their health, personal, social, economic, educational, mental health, ethnic and cultural background and ensures that services are designed around their needs. It recognises that there are other issues in addition to medical needs that can impact on the person's total health and well-being.

## What is a personal care plan?

A personal care plan is a verbal or written agreement between a patient and often their carer, and their health and social care professionals. It records the discussion and decisions agreed in relation to the support and care needed to enable a person with a long term condition to get the best out of life while living with a long term condition. It focuses on improving their quality of life, by

engaging them or their carer in self care, alongside care provided by the NHS and social care services. Care plans support patients and their carers to take a more active role in their own day-to-day self management and are reviewed regularly by the patient and their carer, and their team of health and social care professionals.

## **What are the aims of personal care plans?**

The aim of a care plan is to increase understanding and awareness of self care and provide the right support, empowering patients and their carers to take more control in decisions about their health and care. Care planning that supports self management requires healthcare providers to work in collaboration with patients to identify health needs and priorities, develop specific action plans for achieving those goals, as well as set, monitor and evaluate health goals. Information is an integral part of the care planning process which provides information that is relevant, timely and accredited to support people with decision making and choices (eg, supported by an Information Prescription).

## **What are the benefits of better LTC management for patients?**

- Help people become more independent and achieve goals
- Reduce anxiety and become more confident in the care of their minor ailments to long term conditions
- Maximises the health of those with long term conditions
- People are fully involved in decisions about their care
- Prolonging health-related quality of life and avoiding premature death
- Reducing hospital admissions and GP appointments
- Reducing burden on family and/or carer