



Personalised care: giving people more choice and control

NHS England and NHS Improvement



What is personalised care?

Personalised care means giving people the same choice and control over their health and wellbeing that they have come to expect in every other part of their life. A one-size-fits-all approach cannot meet people's varying needs and expectations. Personalised care is based on 'what matters' to people, not just what's the matter with them. It takes account of their individual strengths, values and preferences.



Best practice

A changing relationship

Personalised care means a shift in the relationship between health and care professionals and individuals. It recognises the clinical expertise of the healthcare professional and the expertise and experience of the individual, taking account of their values and preferences. Personalised care is based on a 'what matters to you?' conversation, rather than a 'what's the matter with you' conversation.

Why is this important?

The annual GP Patient Survey recently highlighted that 40% of people who had received care felt they weren't involved enough in decisions about their care. This statistic hasn't changed much in the past 10 years.

We know that people who can make informed decisions about their health, which reflect their personal preferences, tend to have better health outcomes. This can mean becoming less anxious; having a quicker recovery; and being more likely to adhere to their agreed treatment programme. Personalised care is also becoming an increasing priority for the NHS, with the recent NHS Long Term Plan stating that personalised care will become 'business as usual' for 2.5 million people across the health and care system by 2024.

Professional and legal implications

All healthcare professionals are bound by their codes of conduct. These state that people receiving care should be fully involved in decisions, have information presented in a way they can understand and have their personal preferences considered. In addition, there is a legal imperative to ensure that people understand their treatment options and are supported to make informed choices.

Personalised care in practice

The **South Cotswolds Frailty Service** has taken personalised care to a new level. Their conversations are based on **active listening**, using **shared decision making** and **motivational interviewing techniques** to find out what really matters to people. Their reflective practice is based on answering the question, "what matters to you" rather than "what's the matter with you". A team member observed that one couple initially felt that engaging with professionals would take away some of their independence. But instead they found that working in partnership gave them the support needed to maximise their autonomy. Feedback confirms that this approach works; "You don't tell me, you listen to me and we have a conversation", "You let me be me", "It has given me a new lease of life".



In another case study, a **physiotherapist from Devon** talks about how **supported self management** managed to turn a lady's life around. He explains: "Over the past year I've been working with a lady with diabetes in severe pain and with reduced mobility issues. By talking with her about issues beyond her biomedical needs and working with her setting clear goals and a plan, she has managed to lose over 10 stone and has come off all her pain and diabetes medication and now mostly walks unaided". She said: "After almost a year my life has been turned around. The physio convinced me that together we could make my life a lot better, but it had to be teamwork. I had my part to play in trying to reduce my weight and he would work his 'magic' with my hip. I am now a totally different person and I have lost half my weight and my cholesterol is down to normal levels. I no longer have diabetes and I can almost salsa again!"

Getting started

Using a personalised care approach requires a different type of conversation. Listening and responding in this way requires health and care staff to develop their core skills of empathy and relationship building, often using a different style of language to engage with people. To begin, start the conversation led by the person, ask them what they wish to talk about or focus on in your time together. Then build on what the person already believes and knows.

Five steps to better conversations:

1. Give the individual the opportunity to say what they want to get out of your time together.
2. Explore the topic with empathy and open questions to establish trust.
3. Identify what matters to them and what 'OK' would look like, explore their motivation.
4. Explore moving to action, what is the first achievable step appropriate to the person?
5. Follow up on any agreed action, help problem solve and affirm success however small.

Questions to help you guide the conversation:

- What would you like to get out of our time together today?
- What does a good day look like to you?
- What could help you have more good days?
- What do you already do? What do you plan to do?
- What ideas do you have?
- Shall we discuss your options and the pros and cons?

For more details, top tips, tools and case studies:

<https://www.betterconversation.co.uk/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/upc/comprehensive-model/case-studies/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare> www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXOd-7rn6so