

New expert panel launches report calling for further improvement in health care provision

In 2001 the National Service Framework (NSF) for diabetes set out 12 standards for diabetes care to be reached by 2013. However, the Healthcare Commission has recently found that only 11% of people with diabetes in England have been on an education course and in 2005/6 only 61.8% achieved target blood glucose levels.

In light of this, the Management Of Diabetes for Excellence (MODEL) group's report *Diabetes: Finding Excellence? Facing the multi-faceted challenge of diabetes* was launched on 17 May by a range of healthcare experts who advocate excellence as the only effective response to the diabetes epidemic. Chaired by Professor David Matthews (Associate Director of the Diabetes Research Network, Oxford Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism) the MODEL group believes that achieving the NSF standards by 2013 is the minimum that people with diabetes should expect and that without renewed energy, attention and investment these targets will not be met.

The MODEL group argues that while diabetes care must be efficient and cost-effective, with the projected increase in numbers of people with the condition society must invest properly in keeping people with diabetes well and preventing the costly complications associated with the condition.

Professor Matthews points out that while many policy initiatives have been initiated they are not translating quickly enough into significant improvements on the ground. He said, 'Often, local examples of excellence are due to individual entrepreneurship rather than designed in excellence and are put at risk due to short-term budgetary constraints and local conflicting priorities.'

Dr Clare Davison (GP, Newham PCT) added, 'Diabetes demands a holistic approach both to the challenge to society of growing numbers and to individuals with this lifelong disease. Personalised care is essential to ensure that patients can control their condition and their quality of life is not allowed to deteriorate. The

aim is for patients to continue to live a normal, productive life, living with diabetes rather than suffering from it, fitting the disease to their life rather than their life to the disease. To achieve this, as well as the best treatment they also need appropriate information and here, far too often, we're failing.'

While the group acknowledges that recent targets and initiatives have brought about improvements, they describe these as 'just the beginning'. 'A job done, tick-box attitude won't solve the diabetes crisis,' said Professor Matthews.

The MODEL group advocates an approach of investment for long-term returns rather than short-term rationing. Among professionals, they cite a need for collaborations in place of competition. Seamless care (delivered by appropriate expertise) is key to allowing individuals to move between different members of the diabetes team.

By bringing together a range of stakeholders and arguing for the pursuit of universal excellence,

the group hopes to play a part in achieving the standard of diabetes care which is essential. The MODEL group comprises: David Matthews, Melanie Davies (Chair of Diabetes Medicine, Leicester Royal Infirmary, University of Leicester), Clare Davison, David Dunger (Professor of Paediatrics, Addenbrookes Hospital, University of Cambridge), Eileen Emptage (Locality Manager, South Locality of Wiltshire PCT), Stephen Gough (Professor of Medicine, University Hospital Birmingham, University of Birmingham), Christine Hancock (European Director, Oxford Health Alliance), Professor David Russell-Jones (Royal Surrey County Hospital, University of Surrey) and Grace Vanterpool, MBE (Consultant Nurse Diabetes, Hammersmith & Fulham PCT).

The full report will be available from: http://www.diabetes.nhs.uk/news-1/copy_of_new-model-report-diabetes-finding-excellence/view (accessed 22.05.2007) or obtained from the MODEL group secretariat (paul@kissmannlangford.com).