



Helping people take charge of their diabetes



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Traditionally, our health care system is designed to deliver acute, symptom-driven care.

A patient, in need of care, assumes the passive “sick role” and seeks “help” from the doctor who makes a diagnosis and prescribes appropriate treatment with the aim of curing the illness.

However, with chronic diseases becoming more and more common nowadays, this model may not be the most ef-

fective anymore.

Chronic diseases like diabetes are not curable and the aim is to manage it effectively in order to reduce complications from the disease.

People living with diabetes make numerous decisions from day to day and these decisions affect the control of diabetes either in a positive or negative manner.

Therefore, it is crucial that people living with diabetes are engaged to become active collaborators and partners with their doctors and other healthcare professionals so that they can get the support that suits their unique lifestyle and individual needs for better self-management.

It is with this vision in mind that the National University Hospital (NUH) is adapting the “Year of Care” (YoC) programme from England, with the support of the Kewalram Chanrai-Enpee Group Research Fund in Diabetes, NUS and the Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention & Management, NUHS.

This initiative aims to improve patient experiences and clinical outcomes by transforming the usual outpatient diabetes consultation into a patient-centred, collaborative care and support planning process.

Ms Shantha (name changed to protect privacy) is a middle-aged lady with diabetes who attends the diabetes clinic

regularly. She lives alone and works as a shift worker in security services. She was finding it difficult to maintain a healthy diet due to odd working hours.

More so, she is facing many other challenges in life including work and family issues, which have affected her mood and self-efficacy in managing diabetes.

Despite her regular appointments, her blood sugars were not well controlled. However, she had never been able to open up and discuss these issues during her clinic visits.

Shantha is one of the first patients to enrol into the YoC pilot programme at NUH. The programme provided a platform through which she was able to initiate a discussion with her doctor about these challenges that she was facing during the care and support planning consultation.

Thanks to this open conversation, her doctor and team of healthcare professionals were able to work together with her to come up with goals and practical action plans to manage those issues more effectively.

Shantha’s condition has now improved and she feels more in control and

confident living well with diabetes.

Part of taking charge while living with diabetes involves learning about it and improving your understanding of the disease.

It is helpful to know the complications and how it affects your health and day-to-day life.

Find your motivation to stay healthy and live well with diabetes. Some of the important things to do include eating well, staying active and taking medications.

Work in partnership with your healthcare team to achieve your goals and play an active role in managing it yourself.

In this way you would be able to live well with diabetes, continue doing most of the things you enjoy with the people you love and avoid complications from the disease.

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