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Goals chosen by people with diabetes during care planning consultations

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Aims and objectives: To use a centralised electronic health record system to identify the types of goal people with diabetes choose as their priority for action during care planning consultations.

Methods: Using a standard set of electronic templates created to record care planning consultations, the goals chosen by people with diabetes as being their current priorities were identified as textual entries, along with the action plans which they hoped to use to achieve their goals. Goals were allocated to 1 of 9 types by the healthcare professional involved in the consultation. Anonymised data were made available using reporting functionality within the record system.

Results: 740 goals were identified in 659 people. 578 individuals chose one goal, the remainder 2–4. Goal categories included improving wellbeing in 59.7%, disease prevention in 17.7%, the prevention of complications in 12.6%, symptom avoidance in 2.9%, lifestyle issues in 2.6%, social issues in 1.6%, early detection of complications in 1.4%, psychological Issues in 1.0% and physiological maintenance in 0.5%. Review of recorded narrative suggested that in 153/740 goals (21%) weight control or reduction formed the focus. In 528/740 (71.4%) goals the action plan chosen by the person related to a self help approach; the remainder referral to clinical professionals or agencies.

Comments and conclusions: The approach described allows definition of the goals and action plans chosen by people with diabetes during care planning consultation. The majority relate to immediate concerns ie improving wellbeing. ‘Traditional’ diabetes care focuses more on avoidance of long term complications, perhaps suggesting a mismatch with patient priorities. These data can be used to refine training for staff providing diabetes care and by commissioners for macro commissioning purposes.