

Welcome to The House Journal – Lindsay Oliver, Year of Care National Director

In this edition of the House Journal, we focus on **three key updates**:

Firstly, the importance and practicalities of **patient 'preparation' within the Year of Care approach** to personalised care and support planning (PCSP) including new resources that are available to Year of Care sites and practices. We have updated our patient preparation materials including the option of 'phone friendly' formats for those who prefer to receive information digitally.

Secondly, we have created a **new patient area on the Year of Care website** (www.yearofcare.co.uk) which we hope will help people with long term conditions to understand how the Year of Care approach works and includes some resources to help people understand their test results.

Thirdly, our most up to date resources are available on our redeveloped password protected website secure area which includes a **wide range of materials to support the implementation** of PCSP.

Preparation – *It isn't Year of Care if it doesn't include patient preparation!*

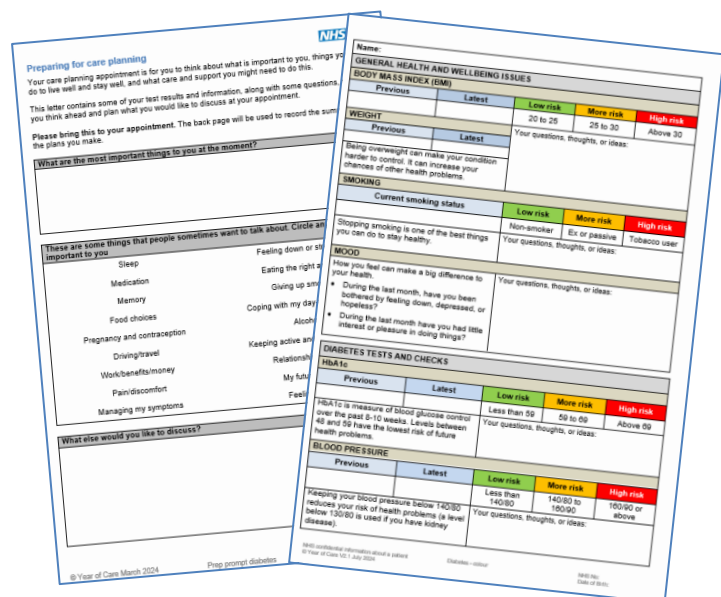
PCSP aims to provide a better patient experience, support for self-management and greater engagement in, and control over, health and care for people living with long term conditions (LTCs). One of the key enablers of this approach is the separation of task-based activity from the PCSP conversation, which creates the space for a proactive conversation enabled by preparation.

What do we mean by preparation?

Preparation involves navigating people through the PCSP process *and* sharing agenda setting prompts with routine test results to help people feel more informed during the PCSP conversation.

Patient preparation letters include these 2 components:

1. A generic front page to help people identify their concerns and questions
2. Routine test results to help people understand their health better



The image shows two patient preparation materials. The first is a front page titled 'Preparing for care planning' with instructions and a list of topics to discuss. The second is a test results sheet titled 'GENERAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING ISSUES' with tables for BMI, Weight, Smoking, Mood, Diabetes, and Blood Pressure, each with risk levels (Low, More, High) and a space for questions.

What are the advantages of patient preparation?

Preparation means that people have a chance to consider what they want to talk about *and* have information to help them make decisions about their health. Receiving routine test results ahead of the PCSP conversation saves time and helps people become more familiar with some of the important measures associated with managing their health. Using colour to explain results and including trends seems to be important to help people interpret their results.

"You can't take it in when they are telling you the information – having it written down means you can take your time"

"I am more in control. I have my results and information, so I am not so reliant on the system. I can share the information with my own family"

What are the options for sharing preparation materials with people?

It's important that people have a choice about how they receive their preparation materials, and this can be identified during the information gathering appointment.

Traditionally practices have posted letters to patients before their PCSP conversation. This remains an option, however with soaring postage costs and a preference towards being 'paper light' we have developed alternative digital formats. These are in colour to support health literacy and can be shared electronically with patients. Once populated with results from the clinical system the resources can be sent (ideally in PDF format) via text, email or via the NHS app.

Electronic preparation materials are now available to Year of Care practices via our website secure area.

What preparation means to people

Supporting people to be prepared is a key component of the PCSP process. This important aspect is unique to Year of Care PCSP and makes a real difference to how patients contribute their ideas, questions and concerns into the PCSP conversation.

Preparation is always rated positively by patients:

"It prompts you to think about all aspects of your health...encourages you to talk to the doctor or nurse..."

"Time to read (results) and think about what to raise...you know what was coming"

"There is more chance to see things and judge for yourself. My family can look at the information – it's helpful for them to understand."

"...sometimes...when you get to the surgery you forgot half of it! I had it all written down...was able to ask her what I feel were the more important things"

"I've never talked to anyone about these issues"

Newcastle and Gateshead patient survey (2019) – patients from 44 practices

Information received before CSP appointment



- 79.3% of patients received information ahead of their CSP appointment. Of this group:
- 96.2% liked having a copy of their test results
- 95.0% felt the information was easy to understand
- 93.7% felt the right amount of information was provided
- 89.5% felt the information helped them think of questions to ask
- 88.6% felt the information helped them prepare for their final appointment
- 85.4% felt the information gave them peace of mind

Patient comments



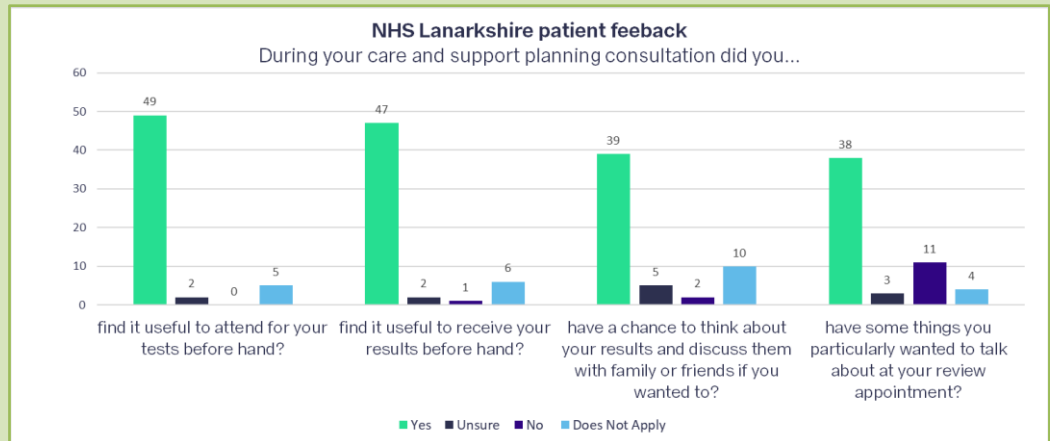
"Found it easy to understand and it gave me peace of mind."

"Results helped me to revise my diet and start to improve sugar levels without waiting for the visit."

"I feel that I know and understand more about my condition."

"I did not understand it all [the results] and was worried."

NHS Lanarkshire patient survey (2018) - patient feedback on the PCSP conversation



What about preparation for people who don't have any results?

We are often asked about what preparation should look like when people don't have formal test results.

It is still possible to help people identify questions and concerns by using a generic agenda setting prompt.

For conditions such as respiratory or frailty, where symptoms and their impact on daily living are more dominant, self-reflection tools can be a useful addition to the PCSP process.

Preparing for Care Planning

Your care planning appointment is for you to think about what is important to you, things you can do to live well and stay well, and what care and support you might need to do this.

This letter contains some of your test results and information, along with some questions, to help you think ahead and plan what you would like to discuss at your appointment.

Please bring this to your appointment. The back page will be used to record the summary and the plans you make.

What are the most important things to you at the moment?

Bathing and hygiene	My current care	Looking after family, carers and pets	Support to stay at home
Finances	Independence	Getting out and about	Pain
Feeling low or anxious	Feeling scared	Feeling hopeless	Mobility
Medication	My future health	Eating and drinking	Loneliness
Keeping warm	My memory	Hearing	Smoking
Staying steady	My weight	Slowing down	My sight

What else would you like to discuss?

Preparation prompt sheet -
Frailty

My lung tests

Oxygen saturation levels - COPD can reduce the amount of oxygen in your blood. The healthy range is usually between 95 and 100%. My oxygen saturation level is

These questionnaires help you understand how COPD affects your life

MRC scale - How breathless are you? (circle one)

I only get breathless when strenuous exercise	1
I get short of breath when hurrying on level ground or when walking up a slight hill	2
On level ground, I walk slower than most people my age because of breathlessness, or I have to stop for breath when walking at my own pace	3
I stop for breath after walking 100 yards, or after a few minutes on level ground	4
I am too breathless to leave the house, or I am breathless when dressing/undressing	5

How COPD affects you? Yes or no

In the last month have you had difficulty sleeping because of your symptoms?	
In the last month have you had COPD symptoms during the day (cough, wheeze, chest tightness or breathlessness)?	
In the last month has your COPD interfered with your usual activities?	
In the last month have you felt low in mood, anxious or had panic attacks?	

Flare ups

Have you had a flare up or chest infections in the last 12 months?	
How many times have you been in hospital for your breathing in the last year?	

What might make a difference?

Smoking causes problems with your health in many ways. If you have COPD and you smoke giving up is the most important thing you can do and can help prevent your condition becoming worse.

Exercise and pulmonary rehabilitation: If you have COPD being active and exercising can help you to improve your breathing, your fitness and your quality of life. Pulmonary rehabilitation is a programme of activity and education designed for people living with COPD. It combines physical activity sessions with advice and discussions about your lung health.

Managing and preventing flare-ups: There are a lot of things you can do to prevent and manage flare-ups, such as using inhalers, having rescue drugs and staying away from people with infections.

Weight (kg): Being underweight or overweight can make your condition more difficult to control and can increase your risk of other health problems. A healthy BMI is between 20 to 25
My weight is My BMI is

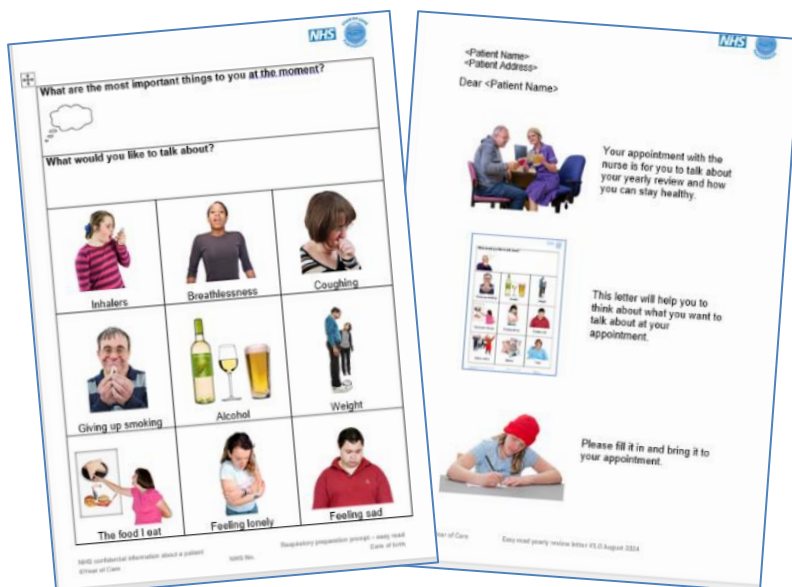
© Year of Care September 2024 COPD Preparation - Please review before visit 2

Preparation prompt sheet -
COPD

What about people with learning disabilities?

We recently worked with people with learning disabilities to develop several resources which are available on our website secure area.

These include pictorial information to explain the process and a variety of condition specific preparation materials. These files are too large to sit within the clinical system and need to have results manually transcribed into them rather than using smart tags or mail merge.



Top tips – how to be successful at patient preparation

How to make preparation work

Sometimes people don't bring their preparation materials to their PCSP conversation. This should be no surprise; at one time or another we will all forget our shopping bags when we go shopping and most of us wouldn't go to the bank and expect to take our bank statements!

It's important to help people see the value and importance of looking at and bringing their preparation materials as part of a PCSP review. Some practices seem to be hugely successful at this and here are some top tips from them to enable this to happen.

- Make sure people know they should look at, write on and bring their preparation materials to the PCSP conversation
- Ensure your invitation letters and information about PCSP asks people to bring their preparation letters with them
- If you use text reminders about appointments include a reminder to bring the preparation letter with them
- At your information gathering visit ask your health care assistant:
 - To explain the process and have a copy of the letter that people will receive, encouraging people to bring it to their next PCSP appointment and to jot things down on it
 - Check the person's preference for how they receive the letter (electronically or paper)

- Let people know that a clinician in the practice will have reviewed the test results before they are shared, and will have picked up anything urgent needing immediate action

Think about the quality of your preparation letters

- Try to avoid developing long letters that include results people have no influence over or are not relevant to their condition
- Colour coded letters can be easier to understand
- Consider printing the letter on coloured paper to make it stand out from other information that people receive

At the PCSP conversation

- Ask if the person has the letter with them (sometimes people don't realise it's part of the conversation and will keep it in their bag)
- Don't be harsh if people have forgotten it (refer to the copy in the clinical system and if necessary, print it off again) - ask what they thought about or noticed when they got the letter
- If people don't seem interested in the preparation material, use the opportunity to explore health beliefs and areas such as low mood
- When people do have their preparation materials with them, make sure they are included in the conversation and that all issues people have flagged are fully explored during the conversation

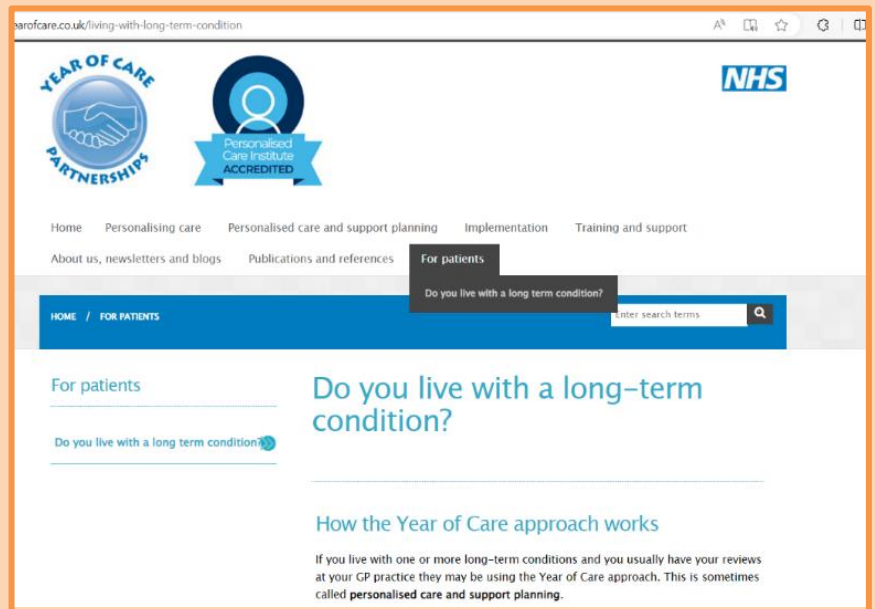
Year of Care Website – new page for patients

This year we have updated our website and added some new content. This includes an area where we share several resources with patients to support them to feel ready for their PCSP long term condition reviews. Please let your patients know about this.

<https://www.yearofcare.co.uk/do-you-live-with-a-long-term-condition/>

Our new patient page includes:

- A simple description of the Year of Care approach, including a link to a short video of how it should work in practice
- Material to help people identify the topics they want to discuss as part of the PCSP process
- Some colourful explanatory leaflets that explain test results for different conditions and some of the changes that can modify these results



Year of Care website secure area – resources for implementation

We have recently overhauled the content of our website secure area where Year of Care resources for the implementation of PCSP are made available to practices/areas that have attended Year of Care training.

This secure website area hosts a range of resources (already mentioned in this newsletter) and a range of tools to support planning and implementation, self-reflection and ongoing review.

As a result of this change, your access may have changed. Please contact us if you have any questions or previously had access and haven't yet received an email to update your login details.

