

# Peer Support

## What is it?

Emotional support derived from others who understand because they are suffering the same condition. Telephone, email or support groups – which educate, advise, motivate and raise morale. The key motivations for patients to take up emotional support are:

## Why?

- › gaining confidence through sharing experiences and knowing not alone
- › helping to manage issues better
- › combatting feelings of isolation



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*‘(would like to) join a user led support group so I can learn from similarly affected people how they are coping and exchange ideas.’*

*‘Once you get that emotional support then your illness doesn’t seem that bad’*

*‘Knowing that I wasn’t the only person to feel like this – I didn’t feel so alone’*

(PIC Survey: Midlands and East, 2014)

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## CASE STUDIES

### Wandsworth CCG

#### DIMPLE

**Key aim:** Peer-led approach to improving and spreading self-care and self-management in diabetes co-created by residents living with condition.

**Delivery model:** Patient champions undertake community outreach to raise awareness of condition and key behaviour changes, peer mentors provide 1 to 1 support and peer educators (trained patients) design and deliver education course.

**Key outcomes:** 5,000 people reached in first 18 months through 200 plus events with over 70% from black and minority ethnic groups. 51 champions trained. Measured increase in knowledge of condition, physical activity, changed diet and awareness of service provision. Social return on investment (SROI) £11.36 for each £1.00 spent.

### West Kent CCG

#### Peer Support System in GP Practices

**Key aim:** To provide peer support to people at risk or at point of diagnosis of having a long term condition so that they can start the process of self-management from the outset.

**Delivery model:** Co-design group – patients, carers and commissioning lead – have created a model of peer support at GP Practice. Patients are offered 1 to 1 or group peer support from someone/people with long-term conditions to share anxieties and recognise others have been in a similar situation but can live successfully with their condition. About to be tested in self-nominated GP Practices.

**Key outcomes:** Support and signposting to reduce sense of ‘being alone’ early on in living with a long-term condition. Building confidence in managing own condition and general health and wellbeing.