

Group Consultations Fact Sheet Low Moor Medical Centre

Why are we doing group consultations?

People with long-term health issues tell us that to take control of their health issues.

They want:

- To spend longer with a clinician (GP / Nurse) who knows them because they gain confidence from this regular connection; feel better supported and more confident to self care when they regularly see a clinician whom they know and trust
- Proactive routine follow up and review because this helps them to take control; reassures them; reduces their anxiety and prevents them “falling through the net”
- To set goals together with their GP both around what they can do to help themselves and what their GP can do to help them
- To review these goals regularly (a robust, proactive care planning approach)
- Connection with people with the same condition because it gives them confidence, hope and inspires them to change and take control.

This is impossible in a 10-minute appointment.

Primary care teams have to find innovative new ways of delivering routine care in general practice that simultaneously saves time and improves quality.

What are Group Consultations?

Group consultations make it possible for our practice team to support you in the way you want AND for you to spend more time with their clinician

How do Group Consultations work?

This is how they work in general:

- Group consultations are led run by a facilitator. They can last around 90 minutes
- The clinician decides who participates – generating a list for the administrator to invite people from amongst their own patients
- Prior to the group consultation, people have all the right health tests and check ups so they ‘know their numbers’ e.g. Hba1c, cholesterol, MRC, ACT score. These are put on a results board so everyone can see how they compare with others

- The facilitator ensures that before the clinician arrives, each individual is clear about what they want to discuss with the clinician
- The clinician joins 20 – 30 minutes or so into the group consultation, once this is all set up. He or she joins the group and reviews the board with people's tests and the questions they want to ask are all set out clearly.
- The clinician then holds brief individual consultations with each of the participants in the group setting. They raise no more than one or two questions. This lasts 45-60 minutes. Everyone listens and learns from the conversation and advice given to everyone in the group. Of course, sometimes people's questions are answered before it is their turn, which avoids repetition and enables people to understand they share the same concerns. Patients can also share what has worked for them and helped them manage their long-term condition, so peer learning happens. For example describing what attending pulmonary rehabilitation is like and the benefits. The facilitator manages the group through this whole process, and the conversations, so the clinician stays on time and the group remains positive, with everyone feeling listened to and respected.
- If someone needs to speak to the clinician alone, this happens after the hour is over or they get an appointment scheduled shortly after – this is rare!
- The clinician leaves the session
- The facilitator closes the session; summarises with the group individual goals, building on what the clinician agreed with each person. The facilitator is available to signpost people to support e.g. with weight management, exercise programmes, understanding diabetes/COPD etc

What are the benefits for patients?

Benefits for patients
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time with my GP. 'It feels like I see my own GP for 60 minutes' • Greater continuity of GP care. The session is run by my GP and I see them more regularly • Proactive, reassuring follow up and review of my condition, treatment, medicines etc. • Connection with peers who live with or are recovering from same condition, which builds my confidence; gives me hope and inspires me to change my health habits • Sets up on-going peer support networks

- Confidence to take control and self manage condition
- Improved health outcomes
- Improved care experience