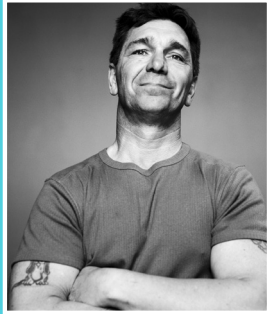


Patient journey – a year in the life of Dave, a truck driver with Type 2 Diabetes



January

- See practice nurse for quarterly check up
- HbA1c results are higher than previous three months, 3kg heavier, blood pressure is higher and cholesterol is also higher
- Agree to eat more healthy foods, limit alcohol, drink more water, do more exercise and lose 3kg
- Practice nurse makes appointment with dietitian to get advice on healthy eating
- Get repeat prescription for oral medicines

February / March

- Driving truck
- Take medicines as prescribed
- Cancel visit to dietitian because busy at work and not sure how dietitian will help
- Take dog for walk most evenings
- Take a packed lunch every day or buy a healthy lunch (not pies)
- Not able to drink water during day because of long trips
- Drink 3-4 cups of coffee daily
- Go to pub with mates once a week
- Play golf once a fortnight and work in garden
- Help son with home renovations for new baby due in August

April

- See practice nurse for quarterly check up
- HbA1c results down a bit but still not as low as they were six months ago, blood pressure is the same, cholesterol is lower and lost 2kgs
- Agree to keep exercising and trying to eat healthy food
- Get repeat prescription for oral medicines

May/June

- Driving truck
- Take medicines as prescribed
- Off work for a week with the flu
- Not feeling like doing exercise – wife walks the dog
- Salad too expensive so eating more pasta and bread
- Not taking as many packed lunches and bought a few pies and the odd fizzy drink
- Go to rugby games on the weekends and drink one or two beers
- Doing less gardening
- Still helping son to do home renovations on the weekends

July

- See practice nurse
- HbA1c result slightly worse than last time, cholesterol slightly higher, blood pressure gone up, put on 3kgs
- Nurse talks about weight and diet. Says it is important to eat healthy food and get exercise as truck driving is sedentary job.
- Agree to try and do these things
- Get repeat prescription for oral medicines

August/September

- Driving truck
- Take medicines as prescribed
- First grandchild (a girl) born 19 August
- Had a bit of a do at the pub with mates to celebrate
- Try to exercise but weather is cold. Wife still walking the dog
- Take a packed lunch three days out of five
- Change in work situation – driving new route, have to be up earlier in the morning, more complicated delivery schedule
- Getting behind with deliveries, stressed and not sleeping very well because of customer complaints
- Wife is spending a lot of time at son's house helping with new granddaughter so eating more processed food

October

- Go back to see practice nurse and GP for annual review
- HbA1c results higher, blood pressure and cholesterol higher, put on 5kg, feet okay
- GP increases dosage of medicines and talks about risks of truck driving with diabetes and possibility of needing insulin if things don't improve. Risk of eye and foot problems and heart disease
- Nurse and GP both talk about healthy eating and need to exercise, cut back on alcohol and drink more water
- Get new prescription for medicines

November/December

- Driving truck
- Take medicines everyday
- Talk to manager about changing back to old route but not possible
- Take packed lunches four days a week, walk dog four days a week, gardening again
- Catch up with an old mate who goes to gym regularly. Talk to him about stress, not sleeping, putting on weight. He recommends talking to a nutritionist at his gym. Says lots of people go to her
- Visit nutritionist. She says her dad was a truck driver and had to stop driving because of high blood pressure. She asks what is going on in my life, sleeping, stress levels and mood and how food and exercise is linked to these. Asks about food preferences Suggests starting slowly and making changes. Gives some options and asks which one I want to start with. Shows me packages of products I could buy at supermarket for breakfast and also for healthy snacks.
- Agree to fortnightly appointments and to keep food diary for two weeks
- Start eating proper breakfast, making small changes to food and keep food diary. Lose 2kgs in first fortnight
- Granddaughter taken to intensive care for five days. Very upsetting and stressful for whole family
- Spend most of time working or at hospital
- Stop taking medicines regularly
- Miss one session with nutritionist
- Go back after a month, put on 3kg. Nutritionist talks about all that has been going on and says to think of it as an episode and need to get back on track
- Start taking medicines regularly again, take packed lunches every day, walk dog every night
- Lose 4kgs in a month

Patient journey – a year in the life of Dave, a truck driver with Type 2 Diabetes

This patient journey shows that self-management of long term conditions is a series of daily tasks for consumers. Consumers with long term conditions are influenced by their various situations (work, home and so on), their understanding of their condition, the support they get from family and friends and the other resources consumers have available.

While health professionals play an important role for consumers with long term conditions, the patient journey shows that the other influences are more central to consumers' lives especially in relation to the critical areas of healthy eating and exercise.

These areas require a consistent focus on the part of consumers. The support and resources to maintain this focus are most likely to be found among family, friends and in the community.

New Zealand research has shown that health practitioners who work with consumers with long term conditions bring a clinical focus to these interactions.

This patient journey suggests (as do a number of New Zealand research studies) a more patient-centred approach where the health practitioner starts the consultations by asking consumers how they have been doing since they last met.

This way the consumer is able to talk about what has gone well and what hasn't and this, together with the results of blood tests and other monitoring, can then form the basis for goal setting for the next three months.

