

Dallas is 78 years of age and lives with her 80 year old husband. She has diabetes and heart failure, with hypertension, breathlessness, fatigue and blood sugar levels regularly being measured at over 10mmol/L.

Case Study- Dallas' Story



Dallas' blood pressure is also high however this is a secondary concern as she is already on hypotensive drugs.

Her specialist had told her at their last consultation that if her sugar levels did not reduce before her next visit, she would have to increase her insulin dosage to four times a day instead of three.

The solution

A telehealth solution was installed in Dallas' home, including an RTX monitor, blood pressure monitor, pulse oximeter, thermometer, weight scales and blood glucometer.

Dallas was shown how to measure her vital signs using the RTX monitor and to answer a series of clinical questions to determine her current condition. Dallas' vital signs are monitored daily by a clinician who works closely with her and her husband to encourage her to exercise and maintain a healthy diet.

How it works

Telehealth allows a patient to manage their condition from home, reducing unplanned GP visits and decreasing the need for emergency hospital visits. Telehealth requires the patient to take their vital signs, such as heart rate, weight and blood sugar levels, and answer a series of health related questions on a regular basis.

Using the telephone line, these details are then transmitted to a monitoring centre where the data is compared to the patient's 'normal' readings. Abnormal readings are flagged for follow up and passed onto the patient's doctor. The doctor can then advise the patient what action needs to be taken, such as adjustment to medication.

Telehealth provides the patient's doctor with ongoing information so that a decline in health can be identified and managed well before it reaches crisis point.



Before the telehealth program I had no idea what was going on with my diabetes, now I feel more independent and in charge. It really does make you more aware"

-Dallas

The results

After being on the program for a month, Dallas' diabetes was still regularly out of control, sometimes with levels as high as 17mmol/L. After seeing this was a regular occurrence, the clinician contacted Dallas to see what her understanding of diabetes was like and what education she may need to help gain and maintain control of her sugar levels.

The clinician discovered that although Dallas was steering away from sugar in her diet, it was overloaded with carbohydrates which included wheat cereal, toast, biscuits, sandwiches, pumpkin and potatoes.

The clinician showed Dallas and her family a report of the blood glucose levels and explained that it showed readings well over the normal limits, highlighted in green. (See graph 1) The clinician suggested cutting down on the amount of carbohydrates in Dallas' diet and tried to persuade her to take up a little more exercise to help reduce weight and burn off some of the calories.

Within a week of following this diet, Dallas' weight had started to gradually reduce, and there was a steady downward trend in her blood sugar levels.

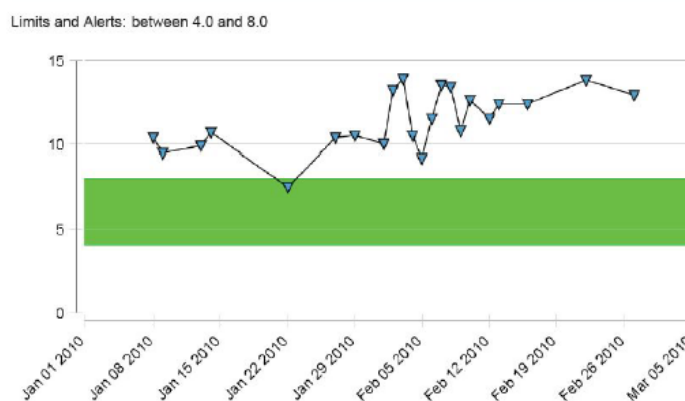
The future

To further improve Dallas' condition, more focus will be placed on increasing her exercise. This exercise will help to

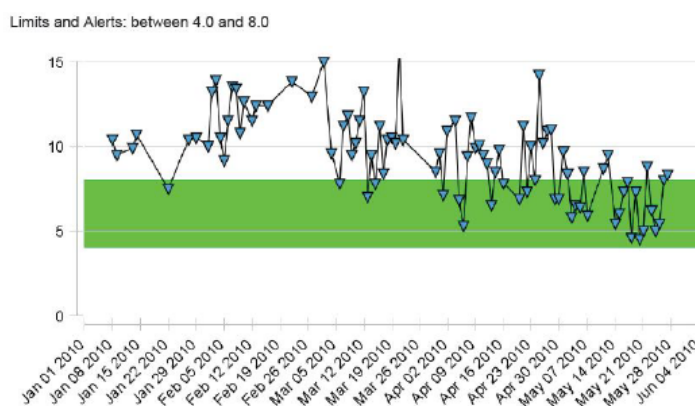
improve Dallas' breathing, reduce blood sugar levels and stabilise blood pressure, which will in turn strengthen her heart and decrease her need for medication.

Dallas and her husband feel there is great benefit in measuring her vital signs everyday and are both looking forward to the next stage of the Telehealth programs. Dallas says, "Before the Telehealth program I had no idea what was going on with my diabetes, now I feel more independent and in charge...It really does make you more aware".

Graph 1 Blood glucose levels above the normal limits



Graph 2 Blood glucose levels coming into the normal limits



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