Improving Chronic Disease Management – QI Project
Improving chronic disease management by introducing a structured birthday recall at Greencroft South General Practice, Annan – By Simon McIntyre (Med Student), GP Supervisor – Dr C Campbell

Background

In Scotland's ageing population there is an increased incidence of chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and COPD that require annual monitoring (1,2,3,4). At Annan South GP, some diabetic patients were recalled using a time-consuming structured approach but all other diseases were reviewed opportunistically when patients attended for other reasons. Consequently, many patients were overdue reviews. A regular, structured recall would improve chronic disease management.

Aim

To introduce a structured recall system and increase annual reviews by 20% by the end of April 2024.

Investigating the problem

2264/6642 patients at Greencroft South were on at least one chronic disease register – see pareto chart. A process map showed there was no structured recall for patients with cardiovascular or respiratory disease and the diabetic recall, performed every 3-4 months, was time consuming. A driver diagram identified a monthly birthday recall, where patients are recalled for annual review in their birth month, as a possible solution – Scan QR code for figures.

Method

Spanning multiple PDSA cycles (QR Code), a structured recall was introduced between December 2023 and April 2024. Initially hypertensives and then further CVD related

Pareto chart displaying number of patients on different disease registers
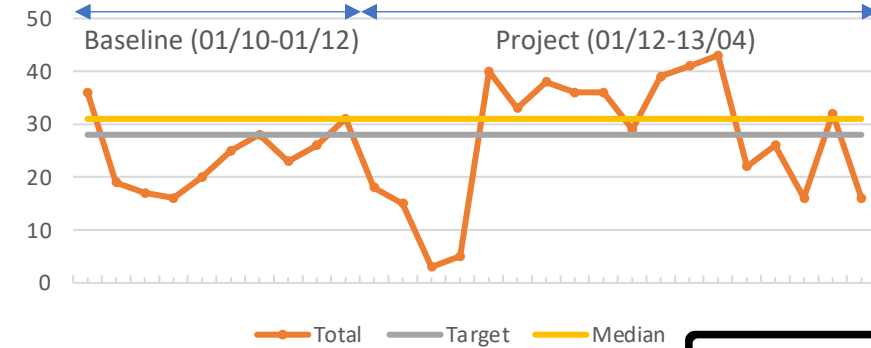

Number of annual reviews performed weekly
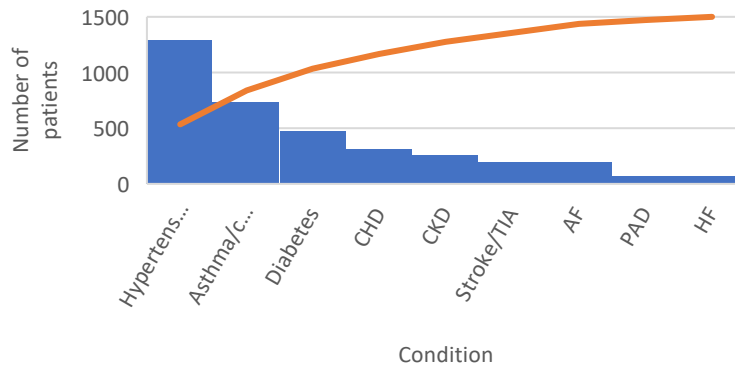
cohorts were sent an SMS or letter at the start and midway through the month informing them to arrange their annual review. The clinical computer programme at Greencroft South (Vision+) allowed patient groups to be tailored by disease type and birth month before being contacted. In April 2024, all CVD patients were recalled. Respiratory patients (COPD/Asthma) were recalled via the same method in April 2024.

Results and Discussion – Scan QR Code for more!

Outcome measure: Compared to baseline data, a 34.8% increase in weekly reviews was achieved. A delay in reviews increasing was due to limited capacity for reviews in 12/23.
Monthly recall contacts and staff/patient satisfaction increased. Administrative time performing recalls increased but time per patient contact decreased .
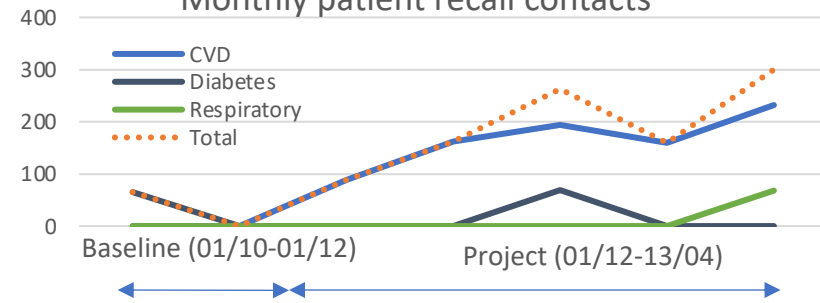
"This has sustainably transformed our disease monitoring" - GP

Scan Me!

Monthly patient recall contacts

Conclusions

Introducing a structured monthly birthday recall increased the number of reviews by 34.8% and saved administration time. Further audit is required to confirm the improvement is embedded and sustained.