



Patient Support Service: COPD

Appointment demand reduced by 30% due to successful Patient Support Service for COPD.

The Challenge

Patients who suffer with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, COPD, often have poor self-management. Therefore, COPD patients generally have more frequent interactions with the healthcare system and subsequently represent a significant cost to commissioners.

Aligning national COPD support services to weather conditions can help patients stay healthy. However, there can be other local and sometimes practical factors which increase the risk of exacerbations, resulting in avoidable use of healthcare services.

The Solution

The Camden borough of London, worked with iPLATO to create a dedicated patient support service to help people with COPD take control of their own health through effective self-management.

iPLATO delivered a rapid patient recruitment campaign through the myGP Population Health Service platform. The programme sought to enrol COPD patients across 27 GP practices in a weekly broadcast service. This was in partnership with holistic and localised support services to more effectively target COPD patients in the Camden area.

The Programme:

iPLATO's COPD Patient Support Service provided the option of weekly alerts and information. Patients were able to choose the most accessible route of communication, SMS text message to mobile phone, or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) voice message to home landlines.





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Patient Enrolment

27 Camden GP practices used the myGP Population Health Service to employ a variety of engagement methods to recruit over 300 patients with COPD to the support service. The multi-channel engagement included SMS text messages and letters announcing how to sign up to the new self-management patient support service.

Patient Feedback

Of patients enrolled in the COPD support service

- **91% felt the support service helped them manage their COPD better**
- **93% found the patient support service was helpful in signposting them to the best healthcare professional when feeling unwell**
- **95% wanted the support service for COPD to continue.**

Reduction in Appointment Demand

When comparing the total GP surgery visits of COPD patients before and after the Patient Support Service launched, huge reductions in appointment demand have been achieved.

GP visits decreased by approximately one third due to the successful self-management support given through the patient support service for COPD. The most notable cohort reduction year-on-year was within the “heavy users” patient cohort at 34%.

COPD Patient Cohorts	Year on Year % Reduction in GP Appointments
Heavy Users (Patients who visit GP on average once per month or more)	34%
Medium Users (Patients who visit GP on average 8 times per year or more)	27%

