

PHASE TWO – CHOLESTEROL MANAGEMENT – PATIENT LETTERS



The following is a list of suggested actions from the feedback received from patient focus groups and the online survey that the project team looked to take forward, as part of phase two.

YOU SAID	WE DID
Wording/Tone of the letter	
<p>Keep the letter simple, plain English but put more detailed information on our website (and indicate this in the letter)</p>	<p>We revised the language, created a FAQ document to accompany each letter and revised the content on our web page dedicated to cholesterol management that provides answers to the most common concerns and questions including some useful animations created by BHF. We worked with a patient reader group to revise the changes made to patient letters to ensure these were in line with the feedback received.</p> <p>Please take a look at the dedicated cholesterol page https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p> <p>Please take a look at patient letters and the two FAQs documents created, one for new patients who are initiated on statin medication and one for patients who are advised to change their current statin medication https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/professionals/phase-two-cholesterol</p> <p>We have created Easy Read versions both for patient letters - please see an example here - and FAQs documents - please see an example here</p> <p>We highlighted in the letter how to obtain more detailed information by visiting our website or reading the FAQs included with the letter.</p>
<p>Do not use the phrase “high risk”</p>	<p>Instead of the phrase ‘high risk’ we used other phrases with a less alarming tone, e.g.</p> <p><i>‘Your record shows that you would benefit from statin medication to protect you against the risk of developing a heart attack or a stroke’.</i></p>

<p>Provide more information about the role of community pharmacy</p>	<p>We are revising this and will update the web page dedicated to cholesterol with relevant information.</p>
<p>Change the letter to make clear patients can see their GP/ health professional before making a final decision</p>	<p>We have actioned this and highlighted this in the letter, e.g.</p> <p><i>‘If you have any questions about your new prescription, please see the frequently asked questions document included with this letter or visit the West Yorkshire & Harrogate Healthy Hearts website www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk</i></p> <p><i>If you still have questions, you could speak to your local pharmacist, GP or nurse’.</i></p> <p>Please take a look at patient letters on our website https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/professionals/phase-two-cholesterol</p>
<p>Change the letter so it is patient-centred and not as if they are just part of a project</p>	<p>We changed the tone of the letter and used a more engaging and welcoming language putting patients at the heart of everything, e.g.</p> <p><i>‘Our medical practice regularly reviews patients’ records to ensure we continue to offer the best possible service tailored to the individual needs of each patient’.</i></p> <p>Please see an example of a patient letter and the tone/language used by visiting our website https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/professionals/phase-two-cholesterol</p> <p>We worked with a patient reader group to ensure the changes included in the letter reflected the need to make the letter more patient-centred; we removed any mention to the project to focus more on the benefits for the patients and highlighted where to find more resources to answer any concerns or questions.</p>
<p>Provide a statement in the letter to try and make people not worry/panic etc</p>	<p>We tried to reassure patients that even if they might need to start taking statins as their cholesterol is high, the medication together with a healthy lifestyle will help ensure they stay safe and healthy. We have highlighted and explained this in the letter:</p> <p><i>‘Statins are one of the most well researched types of medicine, with studies repeatedly showing very strong evidence that they are a safe way to help prevent heart disease’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Changes in lifestyle are important to help improve your health and reduce the risk of heart disease such as having a healthy diet, getting more exercise, losing weight, reducing the amount of alcohol and stopping smoking’.</i></p> <p>The FAQs document included with each letter provides more detailed information to help address any concern patients might have and help reduce anxiety, here you can find an example, we have created an Easy Read version as well.</p>

	<p>Further information is included in a dedicated page on our website about cholesterol management with clear headlines and videos to provide an extensive source of trusted information</p> <p>https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p>
<p>Ensure the switch of medication letter makes it clear why this is being recommended</p>	<p>We revised the content of the letter and added more information to explain why the switch was recommended:</p> <p><i>‘Our medical practice regularly reviews patients’ records to ensure we continue to offer the best possible service tailored to the individual needs of each patient. As part of this service, we have recently looked at patients who are currently on statin medication, which helps to keep cholesterol under control and prevent the risk of heart disease.</i></p> <p><i>Based on the latest research, the most effective way to lower cholesterol is the use of a different statin called Atorvastatin at 40mg compared to the one you are currently on.</i></p> <p><i>We are recommending changing your existing prescription [insert current prescription] to Atorvastatin [insert mg] as it’s a more effective statin’.</i></p> <p>We worked with a patient reader group to review the changes made to the content, tone, and style of the letter. We developed a specific FAQs document to accompany each letter to provide more detailed information and created an Easy Read version for patient letters and FAQs. See here for an example of the FAQs document and Easy Read version.</p>
<p>Explain why patient is classed as high risk (or any phrase that is used to indicate high risk)</p>	<p>We revised the tone and content of the letter adding more information to explain why the patient was considered as high risk:</p> <p><i>‘Your record shows that you would benefit from statin medication to protect you against the risk of developing a heart attack or a stroke. Your total cholesterol is [please insert value if known] which is higher than the desired level’.</i></p> <p>We worked with a patient reader group to review the changes made to content, tone, and style of the letter. We included more details in a dedicated FAQs document that accompanies each letter to explain why someone is classed at high risk and address any concerns. We included in the letter a link to our web page dedicated to cholesterol management. The web page includes useful information such as animations from BHF that help explain what cholesterol is, what happens to your arteries if you have high cholesterol and how to prevent it.</p> <p>https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p>
<p>TBD if practices would prompt a follow up</p>	<p>We will work with practices to help them set up follows up</p>
<p>Support and resources</p>	
<p>Ensure any letters are supported with a</p>	<p>We developed a FAQs document which is issued with each patient letter that provides some useful information on a healthy lifestyle. We have included a link to our website where patients can find a dedicated page on how to lead a</p>

lifestyle information/ where to get help	healthier life, please see link here . On the web page patients can find useful information and links to other valuable resources such as the ' Keep your Heart Healthy ' leaflet developed by Public Health England or links to the NHS 'Eat Well' page
Create information in easy read	We worked with a professional company called BTM to create Easy Read versions for all our patient letters and FAQs documents. Here you can find an example of an easy read patient letter and a FAQs document.
Review website/ letters to ensure no confusion about healthy hearts phases/project	We updated the website and created a landing page for professionals including clear information about the project and each phase. In addition, we created subpages dedicated to each phase. For example, on the subpage dedicated to cholesterol management, health and care professionals can access and download clinical resources including treatment guidance and clinical searches.
Make clear in the letter that the healthy hearts website uses credible sources	The website includes the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health and Care Partnership logo that, as the umbrella body for all NHS and healthcare organisations in the region, should help reassure users that all information provided is reliable and clinically accurate. We will also make more explicit and clearer to users where information comes from including looking at the use of the NHS logo. On each page dedicated to each condition, users can find a list of trusted sources such as NHS, BHF, Stroke Association etc
Provide information on alternative healthy food sources e.g. how to cut down on chocolate	We have included a link in each patient letter to our website where patients can find a dedicated page to 'Healthier Lives', please see link here . On the web page patients can find useful information and advice on how to improve their lifestyle including links to other valuable resources such the Stop Smoking Service , NHS Eat Well
Provide people with information on where to get help accessing the internet	This is beyond the scope of the project. However, we do link to local CCG websites which provide information on local services to support GP practices in supporting patients in understanding local services in their area. In addition, most local libraries offer free internet access and they might be able to provide more information on how to help people access internet https://www.gov.uk/book-internet-access-at-library Some libraries also offer free courses to learn how to use a computer and access internet. Some GP practices can also provide leaflets or download resources from other organisations such as BHF or Public Health England
More information on what statins do and their side effects	We developed a FAQs document that is issued with each patient letter that provides detailed information on statins to help address any concerns and questions patients might have. In the letters, we have included a link to our website where patients can find a dedicated page about cholesterol that provides information on what cholesterol is, its effects, how to treat it, what statins are including some useful visual material and links to other trusted resources such as NHS Choice, BHF, Stroke Association , please see link here . The FAQs document is available for download on our website and we have produced an Easy Read version with the help of a professional company called BTM. Information on statins and their side effects is included in the FAQs documents that we have created which accompany each letter, an example can be found here , we have created an Easy Read version as well.

	<p>Further information is included in a dedicated page on our website about cholesterol management with clear headlines and videos to provide an exhaustive source of trusted resources that explain what statins are and their potential side effects.</p> <p>https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p>
Barriers/Concerns	
Make clear to GPs that those who have had a statin but not taking may benefit from a review	The project recognises that medicines adherence is an issue and is looking at how the project can support patients and professionals to improve medicines adherence.
Create a FAQ based on the questions and concerns received providing more information on statin side effects and how statin can help manage high cholesterol levels	<p>We created two FAQs documents that are included with each patient letter to provide more detailed information to help address any concern patients might have including detailed information on how statin can help manage high cholesterol levels and potential side effects. The first FAQs responds to the most common questions for patients who need to start using statin medication, while the second FAQs document is for patients who would benefit by switching their current statin medication, here you can find an example, we have created an Easy Read version as well.</p> <p>Further information is included in a dedicated page on our website about cholesterol management with clear headlines and videos to provide an exhaustive source of trusted resources</p> <p>https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p>
Make clearer to patients that there is more than one statin/strategy to help side effects	<p>Detailed information is included in the FAQ document that we have created and that accompanies each letter, here you can find an example, we have created an Easy Read version as well.</p> <p>Further information is included in a dedicated page on our website about cholesterol management with clear headlines and videos to provide an extensive source of trusted resources</p> <p>https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol</p>
General comments	
Create CVD champions and community webinars/ Use community groups to provide information on CVD	We were about to launch the first community webinar, but we had to pause due to the outburst of coronavirus.
Provide better access to healthy eating information – potentially from a nutritionist	There are plans to look at expanding resources.
Use the format/resources of	The National Diabetes Prevention Programme is a centrally commissioned course run by a non-NHS organisation which means we cannot use or replicate the course. We have had discussions with the organisation who developed the

the National Diabetes course as a basis for information	programme to understand whether there are any plans to extend the programme to cover patients at risk of CVD and we will continue to look at opportunities.
Keep promoting exercise – yoga/ chair-based exercise etc	We are actively promoting this through social media and with the help of our partners. On our website we have developed a dedicate page to Healthier Lives which includes ideas and advice to keep fit including videos and links to other trusted sources such as the NHS Studio fitness .
Make clear to GPs that patients like feedback on their statin and how it is working – including providing numbers	Amongst the clinical resources that healthcare professionals can access on the WYH Healthy Hearts website, there is a document that helps GPs to ensure they continuously engage and involve patients in their care plan: 'Shared-decision making', please access here a copy of this document
Create a media press release – prior to launch	Phase two has not officially launched, but we will do this once the time is right.
Provide more information for patients who are worried about adding more medication to their current regime	We have provided more information in the FAQ document that accompany each letter, here you can find an example, and an Easy Read version is available for download to health and care professionals and patients. Further information is included in a dedicated page on our website about cholesterol management with clear headlines and videos to provide an extensive source of trusted resources https://www.westyorkshireandharrogatehealthyhearts.co.uk/cholesterol
Use patient case studies to sell messages	We are planning to add further content to the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Healthy Hearts website to include patient case studies using podcasts, videos and written testimonials.