



News Release

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Health monitors at home help curb blood pressure and diabetes

People who monitor diabetes and blood pressure at home cope better than patients who are only seen by their GP, research shows.

The study suggests that telemonitoring devices, which record health information and send it directly to doctors, may provide better support to patients than traditional consultations.

Researchers will now aim to identify which patients benefit most from the technology and decide how long it should be used for.

Telemonitoring enables people with different conditions to take health measurements at home. Readings are automatically shared with a doctor or nurse, who can offer advice or change treatment.

Scientists analysed results from 321 people with type 2 diabetes over nine months. Half were looked after according to current guidelines, visiting their GP practices at least once a year, and more frequently if necessary.

Other patients were asked to send measurements of their blood glucose, blood pressure and weight from telemonitoring devices.

The results were checked regularly by practice nurses. Patients were contacted if they needed to adjust treatment or adapt lifestyle choices.

Researchers found that patients in the telemonitoring group had significantly better control of diabetes and blood pressure than those who were treated as usual. The team now hopes to roll out the technology across NHS services.

The study, published in *PLoS Medicine*, was funded by the Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Government.

Lead researcher Prof Brian McKinsty, of the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Medical Informatics, said: "Type 2 diabetes is a common condition for which self-management is vital. Previous research has shown that asking patients to manage their blood sugar levels at home is ineffective. This study suggests that if health information is sent directly to a GP, it can help doctors and nurses to decide which patients need help, further treatment and advice."

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