

Comms Pack: Flash Glucose Monitors for people living with diabetes and a learning disability

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Background

The NHS Long Term Plan made a commitment to “ensure that, in line with clinical guidelines, patients with type 1 diabetes benefit from life changing Flash Glucose Monitors from April 2019, ending the variation patients in some parts of the country are facing.”

The original roll out of Flash only applied to select patients with Type 1 diabetes. Many people with diabetes and a learning disability have Type 2 diabetes. The NHS is now offering all patients with a learning disability and diabetes, who use insulin to manage their condition, a Flash Glucose Monitor (or Flash for short).

Further, in 2019 a third of deaths of people with a learning disability were shown to have been due to treatable causes, compared with 8% in the general population. A recommendation specific to diabetes from the Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) Programme reviews related to appropriate provision of support for people with diabetes, particularly in community settings.

Flash uses a sensor that is placed on the back of the upper arm and worn externally by the user, allowing glucose information to be monitored using a mobile app. This information helps the user and their clinical team to identify what changes are needed to insulin administration to achieve optimal glucose control, and therefore reducing the risk of adverse outcomes.

The pioneering technology should ultimately help people with a learning disability achieve better health outcomes. The benefits for patients include:

- Not having to do finger-prick checks
- Making it easier to check glucose levels, so action can be taken earlier
- Giving patients, their families and carers more confidence in managing the condition

The NHS @home programme – a range of initiatives providing better connected, more personalised care in people’s homes, including care homes - is supporting this initiative as part of its remit to enable people to better self-manage their conditions with remote clinical support as the pandemic has necessitated. Appropriate technology is being made available to monitor conditions and share that information with GP Practices without having to visit. It should also help address health inequalities.

Key Messages

For people living with diabetes and a learning disability:

- If you have diabetes and use insulin it is important to understand your blood sugar levels so that you can stay well.
- A Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which you stick to your skin. It doesn't hurt and it means you can check your sugar levels using an app on your phone. If you have a Flash Glucose Monitor you won't need to use a finger prick test.
- All the information the Flash monitor collects can be shared with the people who support you to keep you well.
- The information Flash collects can be used if you have an appointment online or on the telephone instead of face to face. This is important because of the coronavirus outbreak.
- You can ask the diabetes team who care for you about Flash and they can help you use it.
- You can also access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>. Easy read information about how Flash works will be available at the following link from mid-November 2020: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

For healthcare professionals:

- In 2019 a third of deaths of people with a learning disability were from treatable causes, compared with 8% for the general population. A recommendation specific to diabetes from the [LeDeR reviews](#) related to appropriate provision of support for people with diabetes, particularly in community settings.
- Healthcare professionals can now prescribe Flash Glucose Monitors (or Flash for short) on the NHS to people with diabetes and a learning disability who use insulin to treat their diabetes.
- People with a learning disability are particularly susceptible to poorer glycaemic control and hypoglycaemic unawareness. [A recent study](#) has shown that Flash glucose monitors significantly improve HBA1c results, hypoglycaemic control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.
- The Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which sticks to the skin. It measures glucose levels and can be read using a mobile app. Information collected about a patient's glucose levels can be shared with their diabetes team so that they can review and adjust care appropriately. It also means that the information can be shared easily during virtual appointments, which is particularly important during the COVID19 pandemic.
- In addition, Flash Glucose Monitoring has proven to be successful in reducing the need for face to face contact for consultation and management and both the GP /

clinical care provider and patient (and their care team) has access to online results fed by the system remotely. This has helped clinicians to support patients through the COVID pandemic without the need to increase risk of infection.

- Training on Flash is available for healthcare professionals at <https://progress.freestylediabetes.co.uk/>, or alternatively through your local Abbott representative. Your local diabetes specialist team will have access to these contact details and will also be able to advise on existing Flash pathway. Easy read information to support training will be available at <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread> from mid-November 2020. You can also access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>.
- Healthcare professionals will need to make appropriate reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability who are being prescribed Flash.

FAQs for healthcare professionals

Why has the NHS committed to offer Flash Glucose Monitors to people with a learning disability and diabetes?

In 2019 a third of deaths of people with a learning disability were from treatable causes, compared with 8% for the general population. A recommendation specific to diabetes from the [LeDeR reviews](#) related to appropriate provision of support for people with diabetes, particularly in community settings.

People with a learning disability are particularly susceptible to poorer glycaemic control and hypoglycaemic unawareness. [A recent study](#) has shown that Flash glucose monitors significantly improve HBA1c results, hypoglycaemic control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.

The original roll out of Flash only applied to select patients with Type 1 diabetes. Many people with diabetes and a learning disability have Type 2 diabetes. The NHS is now offering all patients with a learning disability and diabetes, who use insulin to manage their condition, a Flash Glucose Monitor (or Flash for short).

What is Flash and how does it work?

Flash comes with a small sensor which sticks to the skin. It measures glucose levels and can be read using a mobile app. Information collected about a patient's glucose levels can be shared with their diabetes team so that they can review and adjust care appropriately. It also means that the information can be shared easily during virtual appointments, which is particularly important during the COVID19 pandemic.

In addition, Flash Glucose Monitoring has proven to be successful in reducing the need for face to face contact for consultation and management and both the GP / clinical care provider and patient (and their care team) has access to online results fed by the system remotely. This has helped clinicians to support patients through the COVID pandemic without the need to increase risk of infection.

Are all people with a learning disability eligible?

All people with Type 1 diabetes or insulin treated Type 2 diabetes who are living with a learning disability and recorded on their GP Learning Disability register are eligible for Flash.

Can people with autism access Flash too?

People who have autism and Type 1 diabetes may be eligible through the original Flash eligibility requirements. People with Type 2 diabetes and Autism should discuss their eligibility with their local care team.

What do systems need to do?

Diabetes services can start prescribing Flash now using the existing mechanisms set up through the original roll out.

Local teams are encouraged to be proactive in contacting people with diabetes and a learning disability where capacity allows. There are resources in this pack to help with that.

What funding arrangements are in place to support delivery?

NHS England has identified additional funding to support the initiative until 31 March 2021, at which point responsibility for Flash glucose monitoring will revert to CCGs.

NHS funding allocations will be communicated and paid directly to CCGs in the normal way.

How can healthcare professionals learn more about Flash?

Training on Flash is available for healthcare professionals at <https://progress.freestylediabetes.co.uk/>, or alternatively through your local Abbott representative. Your local diabetes specialist team will have access to these contact details and will also be able to advise on existing Flash pathway.

Easy read information to support training will be available at the following link from mid-November 2020: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

You can also access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>.

FAQs for people living with diabetes and a learning disability, their family and carers

What is a Flash Glucose Monitor?

A Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which you stick to your skin. It doesn't hurt and it means you can check your sugar levels using an app on your phone.

If you have a Flash glucose monitor you won't need to use a finger prick test to test your sugar levels.

What are the benefits for someone living with a learning disability?

If you have diabetes and use insulin it is important to understand your blood sugar levels so that you can stay well. Flash helps you to monitor your sugar levels without using a finger prick test.

All the information the flash monitor collects can be shared with the people who support you to keep you well.

The information Flash collects can be used if you have an appointment online or on the telephone instead of face to face. This is important because of the coronavirus outbreak.

We know from research that Flash glucose monitors can significantly improve sugar levels and control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.

How can I get a Flash device?

All people with Type 1 diabetes or insulin treated Type 2 diabetes who are living with a learning disability and recorded on their GP Learning Disability register are eligible for Flash.

You can ask the diabetes team who care for you about Flash and they can help you use it.

Do I need to pay anything?

No, Flash is funded by the NHS.

How can I learn more about Flash?

You can access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>. Easy Read information will be available from the following link from mid-November 2020: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

Template letter/email to people with a learning disability and diabetes, their family or carer

Dear <<name>>

We are writing to you to let you know that we can now offer you a free Flash Glucose Monitor, or Flash for short.

If you have diabetes and use insulin it is important to understand your blood sugar levels so that you can stay well.

The Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which you stick to your skin. It doesn't hurt and it means you can check your sugar levels using an app on your phone. If you have a Flash glucose monitor you won't need to use a finger prick test.

All the information the flash monitor collects can be shared with the people who support you to keep you well.

The information Flash collects can be used if you have an appointment online or on the telephone instead of face to face. This is important because of the coronavirus outbreak.

We also know from research that Flash glucose monitors can significantly improve sugar levels and control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.

You can ask the diabetes team who care for you about Flash and they can help you use it.

You can access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>. Easy Read information will be available from the following link from mid-November 2020: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

Yours sincerely,

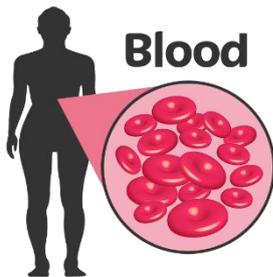
<<GP Practice / Diabetes team>>

Template letter/email to people with a learning disability and diabetes, their family or carer – Easy read version



Dear <<Name>>

We are writing to you to let you know that we can now offer you a free Flash Glucose Monitor device, or Flash for short.



If you have diabetes it is important to understand your blood sugar levels so that you can stay well.



The Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which you stick to your skin.

It does **not** hurt, and it means you can check your sugar levels using an app on your phone.



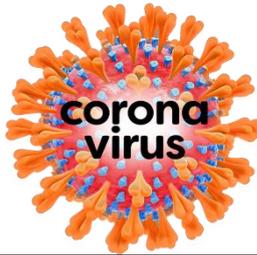
If you have a Flash glucose monitor, you **won't** need to use a finger prick test.



All the information the flash monitor collects can be shared with the people who support you to keep you well.



The information Flash collects can be used if you have an appointment online or on the telephone instead of face to face.



This is important because of the coronavirus outbreak.



Research says that Flash glucose monitors can really improve sugar levels and control.



This means that there will be less need for ambulance call out and people going into hospital.



You can ask the diabetes team who care for you about Flash and they can help you use it.



Easy read information on Flash will be available from mid-November at this link:

<https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.



You can also look up Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>.

Yours sincerely,

<<GP Practice / Diabetes team>>

Template letter/email to healthcare professional

Dear healthcare professional,

Flash Glucose Monitors, or Flash for short, are now available on the NHS for people living with diabetes and a learning disability.

In 2019 a third of deaths of people with a learning disability were from treatable causes, compared with 8% for the general population. A recommendation specific to diabetes from the [LeDeR reviews](#) related to appropriate provision of support for people with diabetes, particularly in community settings.

Healthcare professionals can now prescribe Flash on the NHS to people with diabetes and a learning disability who use insulin to treat Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes.

People with a learning disability are particularly susceptible to poorer glycaemic control and hypoglycaemic unawareness. A [recent study](#) has shown that Flash glucose monitors significantly improve HBA1c results, hypoglycaemic control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.

The Flash glucose monitor comes with a small sensor which sticks to the skin. It measures glucose levels and can be read using a mobile app. Information collected about a patient's glucose levels can be shared with their diabetes team so that they can review and adjust care appropriately. It also means that the information can be shared easily during virtual appointments, which is particularly important during the COVID19 pandemic.

In addition, Flash Glucose Monitoring has proven to be successful in reducing the need for face to face contact for consultation and management and both the GP / clinical care provider and patient (and their care team) has access to online results fed by the system remotely. This has helped clinicians to support patients through the COVID pandemic without the need to increase risk of infection.

Training on Flash is available for healthcare professionals at <https://progress.freestylediabetes.co.uk>, or alternatively through your local Abbott representative. Your local diabetes specialist team will have access to these contact details and will also be able to advise on existing Flash pathway.

Easy read information to support training is available at <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>. You can also access Frequently Asked Questions about Flash at: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre/faqs>.

If you have any questions please contact <<contact name and email/phone>>.

Yours sincerely,

<<Local Lead>>

Promotional materials

[Copy for patient-facing newsletter or bulletin]

Flash Glucose Monitors now available on the NHS for people with insulin-treated diabetes and a learning disability

Flash Glucose Monitors are now available on the NHS to support people with a learning disability and diabetes who use insulin to help them stay well.

The Flash glucose monitor, or Flash for short, comes with a small sensor which sticks to the skin. It doesn't hurt and it means users can check sugar levels using an app on their phone – without a finger prick test.

All the information the flash monitor collects can be shared with the people who support the Flash user to keep them well.

The information Flash collects can be used if users have an appointment online or on the telephone. This is important because of the coronavirus outbreak.

People with a learning disability and diabetes can ask the diabetes team who care for them about Flash and they can explain how to use it.

You can find out more about how Flash at <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/freestyle-libre>. Easy read information will be available at the following link from mid-November: <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

[146 words]

[Copy for healthcare professional-facing newsletter or bulletin]

Flash Glucose Monitors now available on the NHS people with a learning disability

Healthcare professionals can now prescribe Flash on the NHS to people with diabetes and a learning disability who use insulin to treat their diabetes.

People with a learning disability are particularly susceptible to poorer glycaemic control and hypoglycaemic unawareness. A [recent study](#) has shown that Flash glucose monitors significantly improve HBA1c results, hypoglycaemic control, resulting in reduced ambulance call out and hospital admissions.

The Flash glucose monitor comes with a small sensor which sticks to the skin. It measures glucose levels and can be read using a mobile app. Information collected about a patient's glucose levels can be shared with their diabetes team so that they can review and adjust care appropriately. It has been proven to be successful in reducing the need for face to face contact for consultation. This has helped clinicians to support patients through the COVID pandemic without the need to increase risk of infection.

Training on Flash is available for healthcare professionals at <https://progress.freestylediabetes.co.uk>, or alternatively through a local Abbott representative.

[170 words]

[Example SMS/text to patients (people with a learning disability and diabetes)]

People with a learning disability who use insulin to treat their diabetes can now access a free Flash Glucose Monitor (Flash) – a device that sticks to the skin and measures sugar levels. Ask your diabetes care team about it at your next appointment.

[247 characters]

[Example tweet to promote the service – can be used across other social channels too]

The NHS is offering free Flash Glucose Monitors – a small device that sticks to the skin and measures sugar levels – to anyone with a learning disability that uses insulin to treat their diabetes. Learn more at <https://freestylediabetes.co.uk/easyread>.

[271 characters]

Social media image



People with a learning disability who use insulin to manage their diabetes can now access a free Flash Glucose Monitor to help keep them well.

Follow [@NHSDiabetesProg](https://twitter.com/NHSDiabetesProg) to see more images and retweet messages.

Contacts

For more information on this comms pack, contact:

Leicia.feare@nhs.net 07730380826 or kelly.mcginity2@nhs.net 07860180481