

# self management uk

## Being in charge of multiple long-term conditions - A case study



Micheline Lobjois,  
Camden, living with a heart  
condition, diabetes and  
depression

**“I remember one instance where I was taken to A&E and the triage nurse was amazed at how quickly I was able to describe my symptoms and tell her about my medication. She told me she often spent 20 minutes on the patient’s medical history. She said it would save the NHS a fortune if everyone could do what I did that night.”**

I have had cancer twice and have been incredibly lucky to have been treated quickly and efficiently. My present condition, diabetes, was first noticed in 2008 and, sadly, got worse because I did not understand how to deal with it.

I found attending support groups to be very helpful at a time when I was feeling depressed and rather fearful. So, I went to the doctor to ask for information about starting a group for diabetes and he recommended the **self management uk** course. I feel very lucky to have met this doctor. I am the one who is in charge of my long-term condition and I work in partnership with my doctor.

I learnt several techniques which have been helpful, such as problem solving, pacing and breathing techniques, how to design and complete an action plan. They all had a positive effect on me. I have always been disorganised and the course has helped me tremendously in becoming more organised and structured in everything that I do, not just healthcare. The course has had a positive influence on my family too; it has helped me to make better choices, such as healthy eating and more exercising. The notion of being in control and being able to look after myself is great.

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As part of the course, we are encouraged to keep a record of the number of times we visit our doctors. I do visit my GP less often. The more I talk to my doctor, the more my doctor talks to me and this helps improve the quality of our relationship. I have a more positive attitude. I always have a smile on my face when visiting my healthcare professional, which means I receive better quality of service.

A person who is better informed about their condition becomes a better self-manager. The course promotes respect and empathy for doctors and the pressure they are under to supply answers quickly in short consultations. I remember one instance where I was taken to A&E and the triage nurse was amazed at how quickly I was able to describe my symptoms and tell her about my medication. She told me she often spent 20 minutes on the patient's medical history. She said it would save the NHS a fortune if everyone could do what I did that night.

At first I didn't take my diagnosis seriously, but I had to give up my job because I was so tired. **self management uk's** course completely changed the way I saw myself and my condition. I started to do short 10-minute walks three times a week. I kept going and eventually I lost 15kg, which immediately made my health improve. I still see friends from the course and exercise and eating healthily have improved my health enormously. Now that I've learned to self-manage, it's an ongoing process. I've learned skills that will serve me for the rest of my life.

For further information or to speak with Micheline or other course tutors, please contact **self management uk**:

T: 03333 445 840

E: [hello@selfmanagementuk.org](mailto:hello@selfmanagementuk.org)