

# Frequently asked questions

## Digital Blood Pressure (BP) monitors

### Why has my practice been sent digital BP monitors?

Hypertension is the second biggest risk factor for premature death and disability in England, and affects more than a quarter of all adults. It is often preventable and it is estimated that improving the diagnosis of hypertension would save £120 million nationally in ten years. In Camden, data show there are around 70,000 adults at risk of hypertension and related illness, but currently only around 23,000 patients diagnosed. As such, improving diagnosis and hypertension control is a focus for Camden CCG.

We purchased 1,000 electronic BP monitors to expand the range of tools that Camden practices have at their disposal to identify at-risk patients and to help patients with poor control. These were purchased as part of an initiative to increase awareness and screening of at-risk patients in primary care, and to give them the tools needed to manage their care.

### What clinical need are the BP monitors addressing?

In Camden, data show there are around 70,000 adults at risk of hypertension and related illness, but currently only around 23,000 patients are diagnosed. As such, improving diagnosis and hypertension control is a focus for Camden CCG. These BP monitors will allow patients to manage their BP at home, reducing the need to attend regular appointments with their GP to monitor their BP.

### Who should use the BP monitors?

Any individuals who are at risk of developing hypertension and is happy to use this type of monitor. [At-risk groups are detailed on the GP website.](#)

### How is the app used?

These monitors are very similar as other BP monitors to use but can be linked to an 'app' downloaded to the patients mobile phone. The app needs to be downloaded by each patient issued with a BP monitor. If a patient wishes to share their data with you as their GP, you will need to download the app. You can download information [for your patient](#) and [for yourself](#) (if your patient wishes to share data) on the GP website.

### What if my patient has difficulty using the BP monitor?

The digital BP monitors are very similar to use as other BP monitors. There are instructions on using the BP monitor and app on the [GP website](#), which can be printed off or sent to patients.

### **What support is available to my practice to use the BP monitors?**

Camden CCG's hypertension nurse Sara Leary has already started talking to practices about how to use these monitors during her visits. Sara is available to help you identify suitable patients, explain how to use the device and also may be able to respond to queries about using the app. If you would like Sara to visit your practice, please contact her by [email](#) to arrange a suitable time.

### **What if my patient experiences discomfort using the BP monitor?**

As with most BP monitors, the cuff will be less comfortable for patients who are overweight or obese. If you feel the patient will experience too much discomfort, an alternative monitoring option should be considered.

### **I have a BP monitor that is not working. Can I send it back?**

If any of the BP monitors are not working, please notify us by emailing [memberrelations@camdenccg.nhs.uk](mailto:memberrelations@camdenccg.nhs.uk) and we will arrange replacements wherever possible.

### **I have received too many. Can I send some back to Camden CCG?**

The number of monitors procured, and the allocation each practice received, was calculated based on Public Health England (PHE) estimated prevalence data. You can view your patient profile on the PHE Healthier Lives: High BP [webpage](#). If you feel like you have received too many, we are happy to pass these onto another practice. Contact [memberrelations@camdenccg.nhs.uk](mailto:memberrelations@camdenccg.nhs.uk) and we will arrange to have these redistributed.

### **What clinical advice was sought before purchasing these BP monitors?**

The CCG sought input from the hypertension GP Clinical Lead Dr Aarthi Sinha on trialling an additional tool to reach at-risk and poorly controlled patients in Camden. Additionally other CCG GP Clinical Leads and practice staff have been consulted on integrating the usage of these devices within the patient's care plan. Dr Cross, the hypertension consultant and Sara Leary, the hypertension specialist nurse are also supportive of using these devices to improve patient activation for BP control.

### **How much did the monitors cost?**

1,000 BP devices were purchased for approximately £50,000. The CCG sought input from a number of clinical leads and practices, in addition to undertaking data analyses, when assessing the benefits of trialling an additional tool to reach at-risk and poorly controlled patients in Camden.