



## Mary, 43, Diabetes Specialist Nurse

**“This has the potential to be a useful system, that is quick and easy to use – it needs to be easily available so people can’t avoid it”**

Likes the interaction with patients and the feeling that she makes a difference

A people person – intuitive, empathetic

Dislikes it when GP’s don’t fully inform their patients about their condition

Likes to build a relationship with patients, putting them at ease and in control

### Who is Mary

I qualified as registered nurse 15 years ago, when I graduated with a BSc in Nursing. I started specialising in diabetes management after two years of general nursing and currently work as a diabetes specialised nurse in primary care in Stockport. I volunteer for a community project which happens once every two months. We aim to raise the awareness of diabetes by mixing with the public offering on the spot blood tests and advice. I’m involved in running a monthly support group, to advise and help people living with diabetes. I am very much a people person and pride myself on my patient relationships. I always give 110% to every patient and try to let them know that they are my main priority.

### Work ethic

Mary likes to keep up with the latest research and developments in diabetes management but doesn’t like to read large reports, she attends conferences and regularly chats with her fellow colleagues about best practice care management. She would rather spend her time helping people in the real world rather than reading through endless research reports, that could or could not lead to something.

### Trust in information

After 13 years in as a Diabetes Specialist Nurse there isn’t a great deal Mary doesn’t know about diabetes. There are still advances in drug technology and new approaches to treatment which she picks up from conferences and the diabetes research networks. As long as it is clear the information has come from an accredited source, she trusts it must be true. Mary likes to use her locally produced leaflets which she hands out at her support groups, and offers to all her patients. These are customised to contain information specific to her local area as well as general knowledge from Diabetes UK.

**“Giving patients the correct information they need to better care for their condition can never be a bad thing, but what if I don’t know all the answers?”**



### Belief in Information Prescriptions

Mary sees arrival of Information Prescriptions as a good thing, currently she provides similar information in the form of leaflets and details of support groups in the local area. Creating a document that could be attached to a patient’s record would be an ideal process. This means no matter where a patient goes, there is a record of what information they have received. This will also help her find out quickly the information a patient may still need on their condition and treatments available.

### Computer Skills

Mary uses the family computer regularly to browse the internet for news and the occasional window shop. However as soon as anything goes wrong she calls her son to fix the problem as she only knows the basics. She uses a computer at work to access patient records but gets frustrated with all the different systems and logs she has to remember.



Steve, 29,  
Information Centre Manager

**“I need to know I can trust the information we are giving out to patients, without Quality Assurance the project is a lost cause”**

Likes a challenge, along the feeling of accomplishment when he solves a problem

MRC National Institute for Medical Research

Loves the details, the more evidence the better

bnf.org

Dislikes long winded systems, that slow him down and make his life difficult

UKMI

Hates not being able to answer a question

choices

NHS Direct

Google

#### Who is Steve

I didn't set out to be an Information specialist. I ended up taking a temporary position as a research assistant covering for someone on maternity leave. It was only meant to be a stop gap until I found something better suited. As it turned out the job the job did suit me, I had to be methodical, and pay attention to every detail. I really enjoyed the job. I realised I had a passion for research and information, this lead me into a degree in information management. After graduating I accepted a job at my university exploring medical advancements in cancer treatment. The clinical content I covered during my three year research post, enabled me to move to the NHS. That as an information specialist. The internet and email are my weapons of choice, and I feel disappointed if there is something I cannot find out, but I feel a great sense of achievement when I pass information onto someone knowing that its probably helped better someone's life

#### Work ethic

Steve specialises getting the right information to the right person at the right place at the right time. He may not know the answers off the top of his head, but he knows how to research, he has extensive access to articles, research reports and patient information leaflets from all the leading health and social care organisations plus a large contact list

#### Trust in information

Will only recommend information he knows is from a valid and reputable source, ideally that can be backed up with evidence. He is responsible for what patients do with the information they receive, so he has to be 100 % certain the information is accurate. He doesn't want health professionals giving out information that hasn't been approved for use in an IP, as this could lead to legal action if the information turns out to be wrong, or even worse could harm a patient. Sees having a unified accreditation process as vital to the success and take up of the project.

#### Belief in Information Prescriptions

Likes the idea of people having access to all the information they need when they need it. Understands that not everybody has the time or the know how to find what they are after, what may take him 10 minutes may take someone else a whole day. Likes the idea of giving people all the information they require, not just pointers to where to find it. Feels that there are two types of users here - those who don't know what they want, and those who do know but need assistance in locating it. Get's frustrated by instances of duplication, and sees the risk of this as a problem within the NHS.

#### Computer Skills

Steve is a gadget man, he likes the latest technology and is constantly upgrading his phone to the latest model. He uses a PC regularly for emails and occasional web browsing. If there is a problem with his PC his first point of call will be an online forum where he can search for problems and answers. However, Steve does recognise that many patients and carers are not as IT literate as he is. Steve is keen to support patients and carers understand IT better. Steve also sees the role of IT as helping to identify a range of different formats depending on his clients needs.

**“Knowing what information to gather, knowing what to do with information when you get it, knowing what information to pass on, and knowing how to value the result' This is what a lot of people cant do, but I can”**



Angela, 33,  
Carer

**“I often feel overlooked as a carer but this will help me enormously – and benefit the health of not just Dad but me and all my family in the long run”**

Main carer for her father

Enjoys sharing information

Eager to learn as much about her father's condition from various sources

Keen to share experiences and ideas with other carers



#### Who is Angela

I am a qualified company secretary working in the charitable sector. I work nearly full-time but have to be flexible as I am a mother of 3 children (all at primary school) plus the main carer for my father, suffering from early stage alzheimer's/dementia. My husband is a teacher at the same school our children attend (which helps), and I am a school governor there too. I need to juggle commitments to work, family with providing support to my father. He lives in sheltered accommodation but I need to visit him daily. I am preparing to have him live with us if he deteriorates, as I would not want to see him in a home unless it was absolutely unavoidable.

#### Work ethic

Angela likes to keep up to date with the latest medical developments but needs to be able to communicate this to her family and the network of carers (formal and informal) she is building around her father. She is happy to spend time digging out information but as time is short finds herself unable to spend the time she would like doing this. She does feel that the extra work that goes into being a carer places strains on other areas of her life and pressures on her family.

#### Trust in information

As an early adopter of the web (which is integral to her working life too) Angela is a keen user of online resources but is well aware that they don't suit everyone and that there are issues around reliability of much online information. She is particularly keen on the use of online community forums, and a proponent of the 'power of crowds'. Equally, she understands that a face to face chat can work wonders.

#### Belief in Information Prescriptions

Angela has heard about information prescriptions but is a little unsure what they are about. If information prescriptions help professionals offer better information to their patients and carers, Angela feels they could really take off. She has faith in the power of information, but is not sure whether it can be prescribed as by its nature it is fluid and changing. However, she welcomes the initiative, particularly if it recognises there are specific carer needs separate from the condition of the patient being cared for.

#### Computer Skills

Angela is at home on computers, but does not expect her father to be. She feels he resents the computer and prefers to share information with him face to face, providing diagrams and printouts as needed. For herself, she needs to be kept aware of the latest developments and uses her blog as a local resource for carers. She would like to be able to integrate this with the health professionals work, as she feels the rich network she has built up has a lot to offer. She is an active contributor to <http://www.carelink.org/forum/>

**“Carers need to be cared for too – we act as an extension of the health service but without training, pay or, too often, recognition”**