Abstract: Introduction
Diabetes is a common chronic condition and a challenging issue for NHS in the UK. Despite the established benefits of diabetes self-management education programmes for patients and healthcare system; most people with diabetes have not attended and also only small number of those who had not participated in the programmes would like to take part. Factors that influence patients’ participation in the programmes are not well-defined in England and this study attempted to identify such factors.

Method
A qualitative approach was adopted to explore the perspectives and experiences of patients who would/would not like to attend the programmes as well as health professionals who had contact with patients with diabetes. A purposive sample was recruited comprising 14 health professionals providing diabetes care and 16 patients with diabetes who had previously stated their willingness to take part in a qualitative study. The individual semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted from June to October 2009. The data was coded using NVivo software (QSR 8) and a thematic analysis approach was undertaken.

Results
An inductive approach to coding was undertaken and several themes were emerged from the data. The themes derived from patients are presented into two groups including: factors influencing awareness of the programmes and factors affecting the programme attendance. The themes related to health professionals are also grouped into two categories including: factors influencing health professional engagement and perceived factors affecting patients.

Discussion
This study indicated that participation in the programmes is influenced by individual factors and self-management support. To promote improved awareness and access of patients to the programmes, both patients and health professionals need to be better supported.

diabetes, self-management education programmes, participation

Presentation: Oral