My research project focuses on designing new services and technologies to assist with the daily management of type 2 diabetes. Through an ethnographic study, survey, and interviews, I discovered that the patients who struggle most with management are those who lack social support. To combat the lack of social support after diagnosis, I propose an intervention directly after diagnosis in the form of a peer mentoring service rooted within an online community for people with type 2 diabetes.

I have designed the general service framework for establishing a mentoring community, along with the web site architecture, general interface and system touchpoints. A prototype was created in terms of visual artifacts and video sketches, and evaluated by 24 users through role-playing scenarios. The results of the evaluation suggest that mentoring relationships are most beneficial to users when they are initially diagnosed or feel they are losing control. CareMentors must be vigilant with who becomes a mentor, as the users want background checks on mentors-in-training for safety purposes. Users also want to control their sense of anonymity within the community, but many are willing and excited to give back by becoming a mentor.

NEXT STEPS

• Refine interfaces; implement with developer
• Structure Mentor Training Program
• Pilot study with trained Mentors within online community