

QUICK GUIDE: TECHNOLOGY IN CARE HOMES

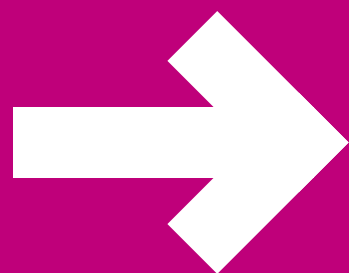
TRANSFORMING URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE SERVICES IN ENGLAND



This is one of a series of quick, online guides produced by NHS England with partners providing practical tips and case studies to support health and care systems.

Click below to view

- Better use of care at home
- Clinical input to care homes
- Identifying local care home placements
- Improving hospital discharge into the care sector
- Sharing patient information



INTRODUCTION

Many areas are embracing technological advances in order to reshape how care is delivered, how information is exchanged and how conditions are monitored. The majority of us use advanced technical devices as part of our daily lives, and there is a need to ensure that these types of digital capability are being used to their full potential to support provision of care outside of hospital.

This quick guide highlights a number of case studies from around the country where technology is being used successfully to enhance the delivery of care to support independent living (telecare), to enhance the health and wellbeing information exchange between patients and professionals (telehealth) and to enhance the information exchange between professionals (telemedicine)¹. It also includes information about secure email and collaboration.

TOP TIPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The following top tips have been drawn from the case studies in this quick guide:

1. In order to get initiatives in telecare, telehealth and telemedicine implemented quickly and to discern longer term impact, begin with a pilot phase. Pilots should also be considered for secure email and collaboration initiatives;
2. Utilise hardware already available or in use e.g. tablets and laptops, and existing or free software available e.g. [Skype for Business](#), Vyzit ([watch the video here](#));
3. The [Secure Email Standard](#) should be met by all health and social care providers. Options to meet this standard already include NHS Mail, [NHSMail 2](#) (rolling out early in 2016) and the email component of Microsoft 365. A project that might help provide the catalyst for this standard is the Care Home and Secure Email Project: please find out more information [here](#);
4. Initiatives will be most successful if both health and social care are working together (Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Local Authorities (LAs), care providers, health providers) and used to drive integrated care;
5. Develop technological initiatives with care providers e.g. care homes or home care providers;
6. Ensure patients, community matrons and GPs are fully engaged in the programme, either directly or indirectly;
7. Think about evaluation of benefits prior to the initiative starting and ensure baseline data is already available;
8. Commissioners can access further information about Technology Enabled Care Services (TECS) [here](#).

OTHER KEY CONSIDERATIONS

There is also a need to consider the following points:

1. There is a need to assess and work with people to ascertain their *suitability* for technology supported care;
2. This joint assessment must also determine if there is a clinical ability to *benefit* from the technical intervention²;
3. Further information on future work being developed by the National Information Board: Personalised Health and Care 2020 can be found [here](#).

1 Craig, D. and Miskelly, F. Telehealth and Telecare - Best Practice Guide. British Geriatric Society. 2010 and Goodwin, N. *The State of Telehealth and Telecare in the UK: Prospects for Integrated Care*. *Journal of Integrated Care*, Vol 18, Issue 6.

2 Craig, D. and Miskelly, F. Telehealth and Telecare - Best Practice Guide. British Geriatric Society. 2010.

Blackpool

Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust introduced teleswallowing to provide Remote Assessment Providing Interventions for Dysphagia (RAPID). <http://teleswallowing.com/>

It enables a speech and language therapist to remotely assess and manage swallowing difficulties by directing staff who are with the patient/ resident to undertake specific tasks.

Airedale

Two-way video link between residents of care homes and clinicians in a clinical hub, reducing admissions by up to 35% to date. For more information click the header or watch the video [here](#).

An [overview document](#) and an [implementation report](#) are also available.

Calderdale

[Quest for Quality in Care Homes](#) is a joint CCG and Borough Council partnership.

Telehealth system alerts Quest Matrons if changes are seen in a patient's observations.

Telecare solutions enable care home staff to monitor for events, such as falls.

The solutions saved £456k on hospital admissions in the first year.

Watch the video [here](#).

Shropshire and Telford

The Health and Social Care Information Centre set up the [Care Homes and Secure Email Project](#) to look at improving the flow of information in and out of care homes.

It was identified that 90% of incoming information to a care home was sent to a non-secure fax and was often of poor quality.

NHSmail is now being rolled out to care homes in the area. An online toolkit is being produced with the Care Provider Alliance to support national roll out to care homes. Please find out more information [here](#).

Sunderland

A telehealth system has been deployed that uses a tablet to aid the care giver to manage the resident's health better. The system has been designed by local experts from primary care, ambulance service and care home staff to fit around the working of the home and health service.

The system uniquely uses the National Early Warning Score (NEWS) to monitor on a long term basis the overall wellbeing of each resident such things as weight, fluid intake, health parameters specific to the patient i.e. Spirometry etc.

More information is available [here](#).

Nottinghamshire

Regular observations of residents in residential care homes using a [telehealth](#) system to prompt community matron intervention. Watch the video [here](#).

In Mansfield a combination of software is being used to carry out GP ward rounds in care homes. More information [here](#).

London

Documentation for assessment, withdrawal and discharge notices, sent between hospitals and social care department were not standardised, mainly handwritten and faxed across London.

Following multi agency workshops to improve processes: fax numbers were replaced with generic secure email accounts; a shared directory was created and standardised documentation agreed, leading to the use of structured messages and starting to develop a national standard. Updated Care Act 2014 templates are now available for use:

Please contact: infosharingproject@nhs.net.

Sussex

Seven care homes completed an 8 month pilot that reduced admissions for the patients in the cohort by 75% compared to the previous year.

The system deployed, on android tablets, enabled care home staff to ask monitoring questions 2-3 times per week, and the answers shared with the patients' community matrons to inform ongoing care.

More information available [here](#).

Stoke-on-Trent

A Telehealth system alerts staff early if a person goes into crisis to avoid hospital admission. For more information click the header or watch the video [here](#).

To share or discover more case study examples in this area please use the BetterCareExchange. Create an account [here](#).

Special thanks goes to [these organisations](#) for their support, time, effort and commitment during the development of this Quick Guide.

Did you find this Quick Guide useful?

[Yes](#)

[No](#)

