

Telecare in Scotland: Update

Telecare Learning Network
Support for Carers
12 May 2010

Introduction

This update is based upon presentations and discussions that took place at a National Telecare Programme workshop, held at the Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling on 12 May 2010. The content is based on notes taken by the writer during the workshop and is not intended to represent the views of the presenters or individual participants.

The workshop is one of a series of events sponsored by the Joint Improvement Team and the Chartered Institute of Housing in Scotland, which aim to support partnerships in the implementation of their local telecare programmes.

Update on the National Telecare Programme

Grant Hughes from the Joint Improvement Team (JIT) gave a brief update of progress within the following areas

Support for Carers

Grant advised that the National Strategies for Dementia and for Carers are both due to be published in June/July. The Joint Improvement Team has been working with colleagues within the Scottish Government to stress the benefits that telecare services can bring to both of these areas.

Reshaping Care

Reshaping Care is emerging as a key policy area, and telecare is regarded as an important element of this. A series of public meetings are to be held across Scotland over the next few months to engage people in discussing future care options and arrangements. Details of the events can be accessed via the following weblink: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/health/care/reshaping>

Scottish Centre for Telehealth

SCT have now completed their transfer into NHS24, and have published a Telehealth Strategic Framework for 2010-12. This outlines their focus on four main workstream areas over this period – COPD, Paediatrics, Mental Health & Stroke. JIT will continue to work closely with SCT in the implementation of the joint Telehealthcare Education and Training Strategy and some other areas of overlapping activity.

Scottish Science Advisory Council Report – *Telehealthcare: Time for Action*

SSAC published the results of a one-day forum session on telehealthcare on 6 May 2010. This outlines a five-step action plan for telehealthcare for the future.

- Articulate a vision for THC in Scotland
- Provide leadership and infrastructure
- Establish technology standards and procurement policies
- Take initiative in telehealthcare research and development
- Implement national telehealthcare solutions as an integral part of NHS Scotland

The executive summary and full copy of the report can be accessed via SSAC's website: www.scottishscience.org.uk

Telehealthcare Education & Training Strategy

The strategy has now been formally published and an associated Action Plan has been developed. JIT and SCT are now progressing these activities and will provide updates at regular intervals.

In addition, materials have been developed to support the education and training activities, including the following four workbooks which have been produced jointly with the Dementia Services Development Centre:

- “Using Telecare effectively in the support of people with dementia”
- “Using Telecare effectively in the support of people with sensory impairments”
- “Using Telecare effectively in the support of people with learning disabilities”
- “Using Telecare effectively in the support of people with severe physical disabilities and long term chronic conditions”

The workbooks are free to download and can be accessed either through the JIT website;

<http://www.jitScotland.org.uk/action-areas/telecare-in-scotland/>

or directly through the Dementia Centre;

<http://www.dementiashop.co.uk/?q=catalog/21/telecare>

Summary of Telecare Services in Scotland

The report provides a summary of currently available services and planned activity up to September 2009. The information relates to telecare/telehealthcare developments as led by Local Partnerships and seeks to identify common themes and issues that have emerged. This will assist with the direction of future strategy and policy. The full report is available on the JIT website.

<http://www.jitScotland.org.uk/action-areas/telecare-in-scotland/telecare-publications/>

Procurement

JIT has been working with Scotland Excel to identify options for procuring telecare (and hopefully telehealth) more effectively. A user requirements group has been established which is chaired by Colin Anderson of Midlothian Council. The group are also looking to improve relationships with suppliers, and develop a specification for equipment.

Dates for the Diary - 2010

8 – 10 th July	International Carers Conference - Leeds
30 th August	Telehealth Champions Network – venue to be confirmed
3 Nov	Possible joint conference with Scottish Centre for Telehealth, venue to be confirmed
15-17 November	TSA National Conference, Metropole Hotel, London

Hints for Carers - Practical Solutions when living with People with Dementia

Karen Watchman, Director of Training, DSDC karen.watchman@stir.ac.uk

To set the scene for today's network session and provide some contextual background, Karen Watchman provided an overview of the contents of a booklet "10 Helpful Hints for Carers" developed by DSDC in partnership with the Universities of Stirling and Leeds. The booklet is geared towards carers of people with dementia and offers some practical solutions to problems that might occur as well as providing some information about organisations or services that could assist. From a professional perspective, the booklet also provides some very useful insight into the practical problems experienced by carers of people with dementia which may assist in the identification of appropriate telecare solutions to help carers cope more effectively.

The booklet is split into the following areas with ten 'hints' provided under each:

- Creating a relaxed atmosphere
- Aggression
- Agitation or Anxiety
- Depression
- Hallucination
- Sleeplessness
- Wandering

Examples of some of the hints offered include lighting and using music or the radio to help create a more relaxed atmosphere. Exercise was also identified as important to reduce stress, and going for a nice long walk is often helpful albeit with the proper precautions: "One family told us of a satellite tracking device sewn into their mother's handbag. They had to make sure she only had one bag in the house to make sure that was the one she used. Then if there was an indication that she was out and about dangerously late or dangerously far away, they could go and fetch her, tired but happy, from wherever she had gone."



Karen concluded by saying that though telecare is able to provide support to carers and people with dementia, it has to be applied in a thoughtful and practical way, working alongside other emotional and environmental factors which may be individual to that person/situation. Telecare can and does build-in additional support and security for the person with dementia and their carer and can be very useful in building confidence for the carer to be able to do things outwith their caring role.

Health Forecasting Service for COPD

Gary Derbyshire from the Met Office, and Lorna Bernard, Moray CHCP

Gary Derbyshire advised that the Met Office had developed a health forecasting system to help people with COPD, which had been in use for the past four winters. There is a strong link between weather and health, and the Met Office has been working closely with the NHS for many years in order to examine ways in which providing appropriate and targeted information may assist in the provision of anticipatory care and promotion of self-management of conditions. There are a number of other projects on-the-go in this regard including 'Brighter Outlook' for people with hay fever. The healthy outlook project aims to provide benefits for everyone in that the person is able to stay well for longer and there is a better deployment of health resources. It aims to:

- Improve patient self care
- Reduce unplanned GP visits
- Reduce Length and Severity of Exacerbation
- Reduce hospital admissions
- Reduce mortality

The service works by undertaking a weekly COPD forecast which identifies areas of elevated risk and an automated alert call is then generated where and when appropriate and sent to the person via mobile phone. In addition, patient and clinician packs have been developed to provide supporting information, and enables the health care professional to see the response provided by patients to questions in an on-line web based tool.

The Patient Pack

Interventions have been developed and endorsed by the COPD Clinical Advisory Group, which is chaired by Dr David Halpin. It reinforces the importance of the early reporting of symptoms, and the medication which may be available to assist. This background information, when combined with the phone-based interactions, assist change behaviour. The peak times for the service are November to March reflecting the link between cold weather and COPD, and a 10-12 days time lag is used to warn individuals of the increased risk and trigger preventative actions. There is also now an identified link between hot weather and respiratory conditions so the service has been recently extended to a 12 month basis. For every 1,000 people with COPD there are around 60 admissions during the summer months. There are a number of 1,000 people with COPD results in 60 admissions during the summer months.

Who should service be aimed at?

People with COPD have been split into 3 categories:

- High risk – 3 times in hospital over 12 months
- Moderate risk – 1-2 times over 12 months
- Low Risk – no previous admissions

However, it should be noted that people in the low risk category make up to 70% of admissions during winter months, and the use of this type of intervention can reduce the flow of people entering hospital.

Winter 2009/10

Over 40,000 patient slots were commissioned from the Healthy Outlook service this winter, covering over 700 PCT areas. In Scotland there is a limited use to date, and only Moray, Mid and East Lothian have been using the service.

Costs

£29 per patient for 12 months, plus any additional local costs. It is suggested that a minimum of 500 patients is required, and that costs can be negotiated depending on larger numbers of patients. The database sits on the NHS server, enabling clinicians to look at individual patient data make notes.

Lorna Bernard – Moray Community Health & Social Care Partnership

There seem to be a number of logical benefits from using the Healthy Outlook service in that people would use self care prompts to check their medication levels and order repeat prescriptions in advance. There can be benefits for carers, who can sign up and receive prompts. From a limited investment to date, Moray has seen a 21% reduction in admissions for people with COPD, with 1,274 patients registered.

Evaluation in 2008/9

Moray carried out an evaluation last year on user response to the service. Although the numbers have been low, people seemed to have liked the service. 97% found the home thermometers from the patient packs useful, 81% advise they understand their condition better from reading the guidance, and there has been evidence of some positive changes in behaviour. Moray started off by developing a traditional model where GP practices would be used to encourage patients to sign up. However there was a very small level of interest from GP practices, and they have been looking a different models to encourage patient buy-in and recruitment.

For 2009/10 a very different approach was adopted. The individual and their family can now self-refer, and a Health Improvement Assistant (funded by the Long Term Conditions Collaborative) puts the information on the medical database. A large marketing exercise was undertaken which demonstrated very good partnership working. The marketing approach included using press, websites, information to pharmacies/GP surgeries, local buses and council newsletters.

Lorna is in the process of completing an evaluation of last years activities, and has added to the standard MET office criteria and developed qualitative data as well e.g. five digital stories, patient opinions. Early results suggest that there is still a limited interest from GP's even although all the administration has been taken away. Final

Evaluation report will be due in July/August, and Lorna advised she would be happy to share the results

Some Early Findings

People who are accessing the service are not offered it via GP surgery;

A number of Carers in crisis have been identified & responded to;

A number of key lessons are emerging;

Stresses the importance of engaging with partners.

Lorna's intention is to evaluate the project thoroughly and then develop a business case to secure joint funding if appropriate.

'A Weight off My Mind'

Sharing the Findings of Recent Research and Carers Experiences of Telecare - Pat Begley and Anne Conlin, Carers Scotland

Pat Begley and Anne Conlin of Carers Scotland delivered an absorbing session in which they shared the findings of recent research into carers' experience of Telecare undertaken by Leeds University and as published in the Carers' Scotland report "A Weight off my Mind"

Pat provided some background on Carers Scotland which is a national charity providing support to carers and carers organisations. Carers Scotland has sought to foster within society the notion of carers as citizens with equality of opportunity. Essentially that notion focuses on enabling carers to lead normal, ordinary lives unblighted by disadvantage or discrimination.

Being a carer carries with it huge responsibilities. But the stresses and strains of providing care can also place a huge burden on carers' personal lives – for example losing their jobs, their confidence and suffering themselves from impaired health and poverty. GPs in particular need to play a pivotal role in directing carers towards resources which can help them. Pat explained that Carers Scotland takes GPs' links to carers very seriously and is working hard to improve engagement with GPs.

Through Carers Scotland and other voluntary organisations, carers' voices are now heard much more clearly, both individually and collectively. The Social Work Inspection Agency, for example, now involves carers in all its inspections of services across Scotland. Local authorities are now required to look at carers as partners in the delivery of care. These are tremendously important developments for Scotland's army of carers.

Anne Conlin illustrated this by pointing to a 2001 census showing 660,000 carers in Scotland, 110,000 of whom provide 50 hours or more unpaid care per week. Carers, Anne explained, save Scotland an economic equivalent of £7.6 billion per annum. Every day, 500 people in Scotland become carers, and 3 in 5 of us will at some point in our lives become carers.

These are sobering statistics which demand in-depth responses. Carers Scotland has contributed to national work on, for example, a national framework for flexible working for carers, and has helped to compile a suite of reports looking UK wide at data and statistics and advocating a new social contract which caters for what is in effect, the largest unpaid workforce in the UK.

Particularly relevant to the network event today, in the year to December 2009, Carers Scotland commissioned Leeds University to undertake research on the benefits of Telecare to carers. The research findings showed that Telecare is instrumental in ensuring carers have more peace of mind, a better night's sleep, less worry and stress, opportunities for a break in caring, and are more able to retain paid employment. But it also identified some challenges in that there are low levels of knowledge about telecare among carers, limited access to the right equipment, and locally, a perceived "postcode lottery" on charging for Telecare.

Carers Scotland and carers themselves have drawn a number of lessons from this research. Carers appreciate direct contact with telecare lead officers and call handlers. Once equipment is in place, they generally have confidence in it. And carers see that faster Telecare referrals can benefit different types of conditions such as dementia. But they also accept that Telecare is not a panacea, nor is it a replacement for the continued human support dedicated carers uniquely offer.

Pat recorded his appreciation of the continued support from the Joint Improvement Team in helping to ensure carers are connected at all levels of partnership working, by facilitating good connections with Telecare co-ordinators. Carers' collective impact across Scotland is enhanced through these links, and Pat looked forward to these arrangements continuing. If Carers Scotland could help, he concluded, then he looked forward to hearing from those attending the Network.

Moving it Forward - Making it Happen

Network participants then broke into individual workshop sessions to look at how the challenges from the research report could best be taken forwards, ie:

- Ensuring carers are identified and receive telecare services
- Ensuring carers continue to receive telecare services that impact positively on their lives

This section records some of the preliminary feedback from these sessions.

■ Workshop 1

How will you identify carers and encourage take up of telecare?

Identify at earliest point in assessment stage, embed in assessment pro formas and process, linking in with carers centres. Also consider creative marketing eg Pharmacies, DIY days at B & Q.

How ensure receive appropriate information to access telecare?

Good info leaflets include charging
National drive on TV
Advertising
Marketing in way that is relevant to carers

■ Workshop 2

In what way will you do awareness raising?

Professional staff
Demo flat – local shops/display to capture passing 'trade'. Leaflet drops. Visiting carers centres/websites.
Ask current carers how new carers would find out

How keep up with trends?

Annual report for current service users
Updating info on leaflets (cost of this)

How do you measure impact of telecare on and for carers?

Survey of carers directly, written/phone focus groups

■ Workshop 3

What carer awareness training should be provided to health and social care staff?

Generic training on awareness raising but need to pull out benefits to staff, carers and users. Some specific illness training, and different methods.

How should telecare become an integral part of community care and the carers assessment process?

National strategy & local should have standard telecare prompt in assessments and care management processes. Default could be why not considering telecare.

How do you measure impact of telecare on and for carers?

Surveys – acceptability/measuring before and after. What does it mean to you as a carer? Work with suppliers to develop more user friendly appropriate kit.

Has last years Carers Scotland event had an impact on awareness raising?

Local demonstration flat to help define need. Time for carers to complete forms is difficult.

The session concluded by reminding local partnership contacts that Carers Scotland are keen to work with them to support and expand the awareness of telecare for carers. The information from today's workshops will be collated by Carers Scotland and will form part of an action plan that is being developed in partnership with the Joint Improvement Team, elements of which will be embedded within the Carers Workstream of the Telehealthcare Education and Training Strategy.

<p>Carers Scotland Contact details – Anne Conlin: 0141 445 3070</p>
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