

Scenario

Email is a useful tool for communicating and is excellent for sharing information day to day. Health and care information is very sensitive and must be adequately protected so Healthcare professionals can feel confident when sharing care records or information with Care Providers that it is secure and can only be accessed by the intended recipient.

NHSMail is a free, secure email system that is available to all CQC registered care providers in England who have achieved Approaching Standards on the Data Security and Protection Toolkit. NHS mail continues to be the preferred secure email for medical professionals to contact Care Providers with confidential information about the people they care for, for invitations for video consultations or virtual ward rounds. NHS mail has not been an integral part of Care Providers preferred communication and there has been considerable work undertaken to support the uptake.

There is a continuing need for NHS mail support as staff turnover at Care Providers is high, staff struggle to find time and to articulate what the issues are when speaking to NHS Mail helpdesk. Care Provider staff often do not always have local administrators or designated IT staff to support digital initiatives.

Benefits

Improves the safety, quality and efficiency of information sharing between Health & Social Care.

Care Homes have responded positively to adapting their ways of working to adopt NHS mail to share information securely with Healthcare professionals.

Enables access to other digital initiatives such as proxy access for ordering medication online, remote observations and digital social care records.

Solution

The Digital Social Care Team have supported Care Provider staff to adapt to new ways of working using NHS mail to securely share information about the people they care for. In the last 12 months alone the Digital Health & Social Care Team have provided over 500 support sessions via Teams, email, phone call or face-to-face to Care Providers locally. This has included follow up calls to ensure NHS email is embedded, offering additional support, shared mailbox management and using these interactions to further digitally advance Care Homes (DSPT, proxy access for ordering medication online, ODS Code amendments).

Additionally, we advocated for homes to be able to have more than 10 NHS email addresses (to support our remote monitoring pilot). We worked with the national team to make the business case for this and they were able to get support for this change, which has now become nationally available.

Feedback

"The Digital Social Care Team walked me through the whole process of getting NHS mail set up for myself and my staff. One of the benefits is that emails to the pharmacy no longer need to be encrypted. We now send NHS to NHS email."
- **(Care Home Registered Manager)**

"Thank you for helping set the Care Home up with NHS mail. It's great being able to use NHS mail to send letters for insulin changes now when previously we had to print and hand deliver them which was time consuming and not an effective use of clinicians."
- **(Diabetes Nurse)**

Data Security & Protection Toolkit (DSPT)

Scenario

It is essential to establish secure information sharing arrangements between Care Homes, Primary Care and other Healthcare Professionals which can only be effective when all organisations are compliant with the Data Security and Protection Toolkit standards.

It was identified that there had been a low uptake of DSPT by Care Providers in NWICB.

DSPT is a requirement to support best practice in all digital initiatives for Care Providers.

Benefits

DSPT compliance for Care Providers supports the requirement to sign up for NHS mail, proxy access for ordering medication online and all other digital initiatives. This includes encouraging the annual submission of DSPT to maintain compliance every year.

Services with funded packages of care by the NHS, for example under continuing healthcare, there is a legal requirement to complete the DSPT every year.

DSPT demonstrates what Care Providers need to do to keep people's information safe, and to protect their business from the risk of a data breach or a cyber attack. It covers both paper and digital records and reassures everyone in the social care environment that data security is being taken seriously.

Solution

The team have developed communication channels promoting the benefits of DSPT to Care Providers to signpost the support available to complete DSPT, increase their engagement and support them in their first steps towards digital maturity.

The team has worked collaboratively with local care provider association - Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support - to increase the completion of DSPT. Currently 77.3% of all providers locally are compliant.

Feedback

"I know this is a scary task to complete, but the policy guidance provided to the wider team was beneficial so we could ensure staff were compliant with GDPR and IG. The most important thing for managers to remember is that the DSPT is a working document."

- **(Managing Director, Care Provider)**

"The DSPT was really easy once you get the guidance. We received help to upload and sort a lot of our documents. If I hadn't had the DSPT support, I don't think I would've completed it in time. It opened mine and my staff's eyes more about data protection. There's a lot more positivity around it now."

- **(Care Home Deputy Manager)**

Proxy Access for Ordering Medication

Scenario

Since 2005, patients have been able to use online services for booking appointments, ordering repeat prescriptions, and viewing information their GP practice holds about them in their patient record. This has helped to enhance the quality of care and increase choice and convenience for patients. Proxy access was developed to allow on behalf of the patient to access and manage parts of their GP online services account. The proxy is given their own online access account (rather than using the patient's login details). When staff in the care home are given proxy access by the GP practice, they can order monthly repeat prescriptions and include a note to the GP.

The process for ordering medication without proxy access is via paper records which are delivered to the GP practice and uploaded into individual patient records. This is a time consuming process for the GP practice and the limitations include not being able to check the accuracy and status of a prescription order. A national target of 25% of Care Homes to be signed up for Proxy Access was set in 2020.

Benefits

GP practices and Care Homes have both seen the benefits of proxy access for ordering medication:

- A reduction in phone calls to GP practices
- Reduced time spent by GP practices processing Care Home medication orders.
- Safer and more effective medication ordering.
- Fewer risks and issues associated with ordering, issuing, collecting, and dispensing repeat medications
- Fewer errors and queries (e.g. missing items, what has been ordered/collected from pharmacy)
- Improved clinical safety
- Easier and faster access, as Care Home staff can order at any time of the day or night
- An improved, easy to access audit trail
- Improved data security due to Care Home staff have their own username and password, which also saves time
- Better communications and partnership working

Solution

Communication and engagement with both GP Practices and Care Homes to promote the benefits was undertaken to encourage uptake of this digital initiative. We reviewed the national guidance and developed proxy access documentation in collaboration with the Primary Care DPO.

Since July 2021, we have fully supported 82 Care Homes to order medication electronically via proxy access and are actively working with many other interested Care Homes and 46 GP practices.

Within the past year, we have provided over 600 1-1 support calls, visits, emails and follow ups to ensure proxy access is embedded in Care Homes, and have also conducted over 50 1-1 training sessions with GP practices.

Feedback

"I think proxy access is really good, Its going to help the surgery a lot by reducing phone calls. The training was brilliant and it wasn't as complicated as I thought it would be. I know if I have got any problems I can contact the Digital Health and Social Care Team and you're always available."

- PCN Pharmacy Tech.

"Dispensary are well chuffed, had the first lot of online requests on Friday really simple and easier than a load of phone calls!"

- Practice Manager

"We logged in and it seems really easy to use and understand. We've placed an interim order and are really pleased with it so far".

- Care Home Registered Manager

Remote Observations



Scenario

The Long-Term Plan by the NHS includes to promote the use of technology to help reduce the pressures on GP Practices and improve care which would in turn help support those who live and work in and around Care Homes. Urgent care services in Norfolk and Waveney, in common with many other places, are stretched. There is evidence to suggest that many older people deteriorate after a stay in hospital, and homes often lack the extra staff that would be needed to escort their elderly residents, resulting in a lonely and confusing experience.

The Enhanced Health in Care Homes Framework 2.0 supports the better use of technology in Care Homes

“The appropriate use of sensors & monitoring technology can help reduce the incidence of falls & the prevalence of poor nutrition. It can also help alert Care Home staff & staff working in the wider health system about the deteriorating health of an individual before a crisis occurs”.

Solution

This project aimed to provide Care Home staff with a digital solution for remote observations to enable timely, responsive care & treatment for residents. A NEWS2 score / Is My Resident Unwell assessment aids early identification of deteriorating health and/or infection & so improves health outcomes for Care Home residents. Bluetooth technology enables Care Home staff to easily take observations to detect deterioration in residents earlier, along with an escalation protocol to ensure that the resident receives the right treatment at the right time in the right environment. When consulting with Care Home staff about a resident, clinicians can benefit from accurate and timely observations.

The pilot's success involved training Care Home staff how to undertake NEWS2 scores utilising the Whzan Blue Box, as well as how to manage caseloads within the online Whzan platform. Prior to starting the pilot, we developed remote observation onboarding protocols with the aligned GP practice of each Care Home, and identified a named person that the Care Home could contact if they needed to escalate concerns about a resident.

Benefits

Care Home staff feel more empowered and upskilled by using technology for observations they complete with residents. Care staff have also said during weekly ward rounds they feel more comfortable discussing residents that are unwell, as they have a NEWS2 score to support their concerns.

- Care Home staff are able to identify the early signs of deterioration
- Improved ability for healthcare staff to prioritise clinical assessment, diagnosis & care / treatment
- Improved collaboration between Care Home staff & clinicians
- Regular recording of observations to inform ward rounds, MDTs and monthly wellness checks
- Reduced GP & Primary care visits

8 Care Homes are now using the Whzan Bluetooth technology on a regular basis – 890 residents with verified NHS numbers in caseloads have been supported, 182 staff have been trained in identifying the soft signs of deterioration, taking vital signs observations and escalating concerns to a clinician using NEWS2.

Since July, 7912 observations have been taken, 371 NEWS2 scores have been recorded and 34 sets of observations have been uploaded into S1 by clinicians at GP practices.

Feedback

‘We really like the Whzan Blue Box. It helps us when we have our weekly ward rounds with the GP. The residents also like that the equipment talks to them and looks more high-tech than traditional equipment.’
(Care Home Manager)

‘Previously we would run across to the Care Home if we thought a resident was unwell. What the NEWS2 does now is it gives a background to the GP to help the doctor prioritise the residents in their clinic or for it they need to be put through to the home visiting team. If the GP is going to visit, they have a bit more information to go on before they attend’ **(Practice Manager)**

“being able to see the care home records will really help GPs understand resident's progress over time, and give them a more holistic picture of them” **(GP)**

Digital Social Care Records



Scenario

A Digital Social Care Record (DSCR) allows the digital recording of care information and care received by an individual, within a social care setting, replacing traditional paper records. DSCRs are person-centred and enable information to be shared securely and in real-time with authorised individuals across the health and care sector.

The Digitising Social Care Records programme is tasked with ensuring that 80% of CQC registered adult social care providers have a digital social care record solution in place that can interoperate with a local shared care record by March 2024.

Benefits

These records will play an important role in joining up care across social care and the NHS, freeing up time spent by care workers and managers on administrative tasks whilst equipping them with the information they need to deliver care. They are the platform on which other remote care tools can integrate and can enable the greater personalisation of care planning that focuses on the individual.

DSCRs are person-centred and enable information to be shared securely and in real-time with authorised individuals within the organisation, with a person's circle of care and with specified individuals involved in the care and support of the person.

Feedback

Care Providers recently told Norfolk County Council's Integrated Quality Service that using DSCR means: "Less time recording, more time supporting" "Audits more meaningful, take half the time" "Safety-net for staff who miss updates at handover" "Concerns with weights & hydration get picked up sooner"

Solution

Norfolk & Waveney ICS have been awarded funding by NHS Transformation to support CQC registered Care Providers in Norfolk with grants of up to 50% of the first-year implementation costs for moving from paper records to a Digital Social Care Record (DSCR).

We are funding CQC registered locations in Norfolk and Waveney, who have NHS mail and are DSPT compliant to Standards Met. Providers have access to an Assured Supplier List and other resources to support an informed decision.

The Digital Health & Social Care Team hosted a very successful Digital Social Care Record Launch event on the 4th October 2022. 62 Care Providers attended the launch event and had the opportunity to meet and talk to the Digital Health & Social Care Team, NHS England, NWICB Shared Care Record Team, CQC, Norfolk County Council, Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support, other local Care Providers and the Assured Suppliers.

Our team were the only Integrated Care System in England to get engagement and representation from CQC, and in particular their Chief Digital Officer in relation to the digitising of social care. In our 'Questions and Answers' part of the launch event, Mark Sutton confirmed that positive consideration would be given to Care Providers who are in the process of adopting a Digital Social Care Record during CQC inspections.

Caroline Day, Programme Manager Digitising Social Care Programme, also gave a very moving and poignant presentation about the benefits of adopting a Digital Social Care Record.

Assured Suppliers provided demos for all interested Care Providers so they could see the products in action and also ask questions about the capability of each one.

Scenario

During our interactions with Care Home staff it was identified that out of hours, in particular the weekends, it is difficult to receive prompt advice and support for deteriorating conditions of their residents. We approached IC24 who provide the NHS 111 and Out of Hours GP service in this area, to collaborate on improving safety and quality of care through a proactive approach so the resident would receive the right treatment at the right time in the right environment.

A high volume of calls to IC24 111 service from Care Homes has put a huge amount of pressure on the system. Many calls were resulting in unnecessary conveyances to hospitals, deconditioning of the resident from a hospital stay and therefore increased dependency. This affects the discharge plan on whether the resident can return to their Care Home or requires an alternative placement. It had also been identified that several Care Homes had a high proportion of calls with a low conveyance which demonstrated a need for more detailed triage and clinical support. Care Home staff reported they do not always feel confident in deciding who to call in an urgent situation or what information they need to provide. Many said they have felt scared and anxious when making an urgent call.

Solution

The project goals were identified in a collaborative partnership with IC24 to provide a proactive approach for Care Home staff to identify any health concerns of their residents in a responsive and timely manner. Bluetooth technology enables Care Home staff to take observations to detect deterioration in residents earlier, plus proactive ward rounds delivered at weekends and Bank Holidays to Care Homes that make the most calls to out of hours services potentially reducing the need for ambulance calls outs and conveyance to hospital.

Each Care Home on the pilot is called by a clinician from IC24 at a regular time twice on Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays to see if there are any concerns about residents and the clinician can then provide a video consultation and/or visit as appropriate. Care Homes were supported with NHS mail set up and access to shared mailboxes to ensure invitations for video consultations could be easily accessed. The ICB provided the Care Homes with tablets to ensure they had the correct technology to undertake effective video consultations. The homes were contacted regularly by the Digital Health & Social Care Team to ensure any problems were rectified and to gain feedback.

This is the first time IC24 / 111 have piloted this service provision in collaboration with NWICB.

Benefits

Through this collaborative approach IC24 were able to provide proactive clinical support and advice in a planned way thus reducing the requirement for unplanned urgent or emergency care interventions.

The pilot phase has demonstrated that following clinical triage: 83% of residents were treated with home management, 14% had a home visit, 1.5% required an ambulance and 1.5% were referred to a community nurse.

All of the care homes taking part in the pilot have confirmed they are not calling 111 or 999 as frequently, as they have the reassurance that a clinician will be calling twice a day, on weekends and Bank Holidays.

Care Home staff have increased confidence in identifying the soft signs of deterioration and when they need to escalate to a Health professional to care for residents that are unwell.

Feedback

'Yes, it was great for the residents to be able to see a clinician face to face on the screen about their health concern and it enabled us to get treatment/ medication over a bank holiday weekend which is really positive 😊' (Care Home)

'The pilot demonstrates the proactive nature of the service, and how partners/commissioners can work together to use digital tech to keep people well in their own settings, rather than being reactive' (Communications Lead IC24)

Link to video <https://vimeo.com/781824899/ea2f166acb>