

Local Investment Programme

Luton Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council - **Innovation and technology in care homes**

CASE STUDY

April 2018

Care and Health Improvement Programme

Local Investment Programme

Local Investment Programme is overseen by the Local Government Association on behalf of the funders NHS Digital

OPM Group and the Bayswater Institute were commissioned to evaluate the Local Investment Programme producing an interim evaluation report and case studies.

Luton Borough Council was one of 19 local authorities to be funded in 2017/18 under the theme – **sharing information and integrating services**

The Local Investment Programme full interim evaluation can be found at www.local.gov.uk/scdip



Synopsis

Challenge & solution

The impact

Sustainability

Lessons learned

Project Summary: Enabling residential/nursing homes to access electronic shared care records with health services

Partners: Central Bedfordshire Council, Skills for Care

Outcomes: Prevent avoidable emergency admissions, improve the experience of residents and improve the quality of service.

Projected Savings: Reducing non-elective admissions (£366,000) and improving efficiencies in social care (£40,000)

- This project aims to test a technical solution and alternative response in the care homes as phase one, with a view to expanding into other residential settings as later phases.
- It plans to prevent avoidable emergency admissions from care home placements by enabling care homes to connect with enhanced health professionals including Skype and making use of telecare and telehealth.
- Additionally, it aims to ensure that when residents are transferred between care settings the latest care record is made available securely.
- The experience of residents should improve by receiving more care in their home and enabling contact with carers, family etc. and improve the quality by ensuring clinicians and officers can utilise technology.
- The funding will be used to pilot technology in a limited number of care homes.
- Funding has already been secured from the Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK) information sharing project, to complete the audit of connectivity for each care home in the area.
- Following this, technology will be installed in homes that offer a variety of current solutions so that we can test the ability to roll out across all settings.
- STP and LDR plans for Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes (BLMK), identify a shared care record and digital solutions as key enablers and this project is closely aligned to the current initiatives.

The Challenge

- There are 32 residential homes in Central Bedfordshire and a further 26 in Luton. The majority of which have limited access to electronic records and/or no secure way to transfer data between homes and health and social care providers.
- Additionally, few homes have a connection to Wi-Fi, which means that residents cannot connect to relatives or health professionals through electronic means and there is a limited use of assistive technology.
- There are a high number of avoidable hospital admissions from nursing and residential care homes in Luton and Bedfordshire.
- Currently the response to a telecare alarm is an ambulance with little alternatives.

The Solution

- To make progress, each care setting needs to be enabled to make use of developments and increase the pace of digitisation.
- Offering new tele-health options other than calling an ambulance could reduce hospital admissions and improved quality of life.

Impact for clients:

- Improved client experience and quality of life.
- Impact for professionals
- Improved resource efficiencies.

Cost savings:

- Savings will result from reductions in hospital admissions which will rely on a whole system change. Hospital admissions should reduce by 25% as a result of this project (enabling electronic consultations). This should save approximately £366,000.
- If admittances are reduced, then so will the requirement to discharge, meaning Care Staff in homes will be freed up, along with social workers in discharge teams. This should save approximately £37.8,000
- Reduction of the number of incidents.

- Care homes taken on as pilots will be expected to sign up to any continuing revenue cost, at no increase to the current contracted rate. This will ensure sustainability after the pilot and one-off costs and efficiencies to the care home operation as a result of the project should fund increased costs.

Anticipated lessons:

- The learning from the project will also inform phase two, which anticipates targeting wider communal housing – extra care, sheltered accommodation and supported living.
- The project aims to produce a training tool kit that can be used and shared across any other authorities that have similar aspirations.
- The project will also collect comments from all service users, staff, and carers and relatives involved and share the learning, by the use of video clips.

Learning to date:

- By taking a staged approach and graduating homes from ‘Bronze’ to ‘Silver’ with a ‘Gold’ service in development it has ensured buy in by the homes.
- The homes have been further incentivised to engage by establishing better quality Wi-Fi across the homes.
- The initial batch of five are in the process of graduating from ‘Bronze’ to ‘Silver’ but a further 7 have moved to bronze and deployment is in action.

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The final evaluation report will be published by March 2019