Derbyshire County Council – improving assessment processes for equipment and adaptations

Social Care Digital Innovation Programme (SCDIP) 2019-21 progress report
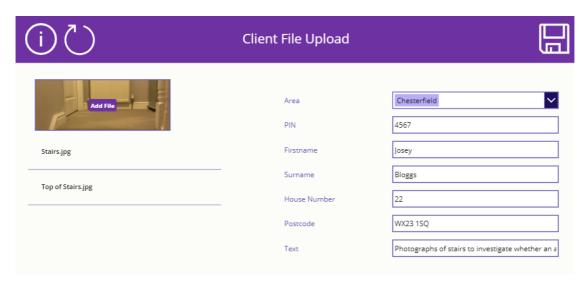
Implementing digital tools to enable remote assessments for adaptations and equipment for clients

Progress update

The project is currently on track to implement and utilise digital technologies for remote assessments across three pilot areas by 31 December 2020.

Technological achievements

A Microsoft Teams Power App has been developed and this is currently being tested by our Adult Care Assessments and Triage Team (ACATT). Any professional who has Microsoft Teams installed on their device can add photographs and/or videos for a client. Once submitted, the images are uploaded to the relevant area (ie Amber Valley) ready for ACATT to triage and determine whether a prescribed solution can be achieved.

An additional 376 smartphones have been purchased across the department to enable workers to access digital tools such as Microsoft Teams, as well as access to their emails.

Skype and Teams user guides have been produced for ACATT. ACATT has commenced work on reducing the waiting lists in the three pilot areas by using remote digital tools, where possible, such as Skype and Teams.

Other achievements

Communications and project plans have been completed and will be signed off at the next project board meeting on 9 June 2020. The communications plan is already being used as a means of communicating with different staff groups and stakeholders.

There are six workstreams being managed by a project manager and occupational therapist (OT) senior practitioner: training, website/portal forms, technology, operational processes/practices, metrics/KPIs, and communications. Progress is being made across all workstreams including documentation on guidance and scripts for ACATT and the commencement of the development of a Mosaic Professional Portal Form.

Outcomes defined and measurement methodology

The following targeted measurable outcomes are currently being captured and reported:
Measurable:
- Reduced duplication of assessments
- Increased % of referrals resolved at first point of contact
- Increased click-throughs from webpage for self-serve
- Client satisfaction with service
- Staff survey on lessons learnt and impact
- Increased % of referrals undertaken remotely rather than a physic visit when assigned to an area
- Reduced falls

Not quantifiable:
- Wider skillset for staff who do not have formal training on assessments for equipment and adaptations
- Less time spent by staff on managing waiting list complaints
- Increased % of OT caseload dedicated to prevention and reablement
- Greater public sector efficiencies
- Speedier resolution of presenting problems from the public

In addition to these measures we will be evaluating clients' experience of the service through ongoing customer conversations.

COVID-19 issues

A lot of time has been redirected to COVID-19 contingency planning. There are more demands on all workers to respond to assessments and adaptations in a different way. Ensuring new working practices/successes across all areas are captured is a challenge.

More users are asking if they can use other digital tools that the authority does not support, such as WhatsApp. This is currently being investigated to see if a pilot on its use for video calls can be undertaken as part of the project.

Sharing learning

Conversations have taken place with colleagues in NHSX on how the use of digital technologies have enabled work to carry on during the Covid-19 crisis.

Learning is being shared across the whole service in the use of digital tools such as Microsoft Teams and Skype. As a result, a number of other staff groups have implemented new Teams sites and are using Skype and Teams as a means of undertaking meetings and discussions with their clients.