

East Riding telehealth service



We see telehealth as being absolutely central to our strategy for managing long-term conditions and supporting people to live as independently as possible, which means changing the model of how Health and Social Care deliver services. Where traditionally people have gone to a place to receive a service from someone, this is about people managing their own care, taking control of their condition and having a wider range of technology solutions to support their choices and maintain their independence

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The challenge

In common with other parts of the UK, NHS East Riding of Yorkshire has a significant challenge in meeting the needs of the growing number of people with long-term conditions, within a difficult economic environment.

How can telehealth be used to help them achieve their goal of supporting patients to self-manage, increasing efficiencies in service delivery and reducing pressure on the health system?

What we did

Following a successful pilot project based in Bridlington, in 2008, a business case was approved for a staged, three-year telehealth roll-out within the East Riding of Yorkshire, as part of the PCT's Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) Programme. In 2010/11 50 Tunstall mymedic systems were commissioned to supplement the 10 units in existence from the Bridlington pilot. Deployment began in September 2010, following an extensive programme of staff training on the technology and associated software, icp triagemanager.

Referrals to the service are predominantly made via community matrons and specialist nurses linked to Neighbourhood Care Teams, primarily for patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (73%) and Chronic Heart Failure (18%) and a small number with Diabetes Mellitus. Installation, set-up, removal and first-line data monitoring (technical support) is carried out via East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Lifeline team based in Driffield. Installations are for three months in the first instance, with the option for extension following clinical assessment.

Patients use the system on a daily basis to record a range of vital signs (e.g. weight, blood pressure, pulse, blood glucose) and answer questions related to symptoms. This information is sent via their mymedic systems to a central, secure server and can be viewed using triagemanager. The software will trigger an alert at the Lifeline centre in the case of technical error (such as reading not received) or if the reading falls outside pre-defined limits (parameters) and requires a clinical triage (e.g. blood pressure outside set limits). The Lifeline operator will respond to technical alerts and refer clinical alerts to the appropriate community matron, specialist nurse or, where in place, a telehealth co-ordinator.



Result Highlights

- Reduction in costs of 58%
- Net savings of £103 per monitoring month and an ROI of 61%
- 89% of patients felt the system helped them manage their own health



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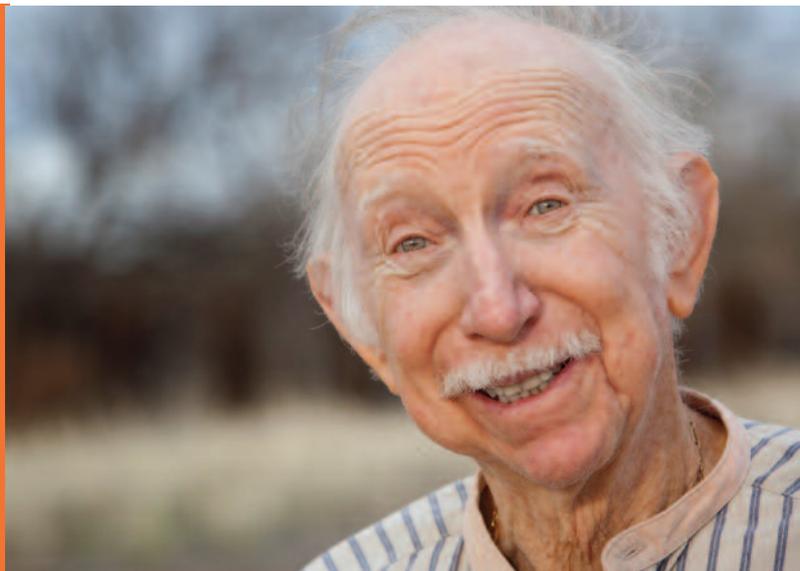


East Riding of Yorkshire

Tunstall

“ I was in hospital six times since June last year, and two Mondays ago I started with a bad chest infection which I didn't realise was happening but the machine did. (Telehealth) has worked for me because it's stopped me going to hospital.

Keith, telehealth patient



Results

The University of Hull evaluated the cost-effectiveness of the telehealth service in East Riding, by comparing non-elective healthcare costs during deployment with the same costs before and (if applicable) after deployment. This revealed:

- There were 282 telehealth installations in 13 months (September 2010 – October 2011)
- A reduction in costs of 58% and gross savings of £272 per monitoring month were identified
- With procurement and running costs of £169 per monitoring month, this therefore suggests net savings of £103 per monitoring month and a return on investment of 61%

NB. Running costs include equipment purchase, communication fees, software licences, staffing and administration costs.

When patients came to the end of their telehealth service they were asked to complete a survey and the results of the 57 completed show they were happy with the service that they received and would recommend it to others:

- 84% agreed or strongly agreed that telehealth gave them a sense of security
- 89% agreed or strongly agreed that the system helped them manage their own health
- 84% agreed or strongly agreed that telehealth enhanced their knowledge of their condition

Throughout the project, feedback from practitioners has been sought via focus groups and questionnaires. This feedback has been generally positive with practitioners reporting their patients have increased in confidence and are better able to self manage their condition. Some clinicians also believed that the telehealth system had reduced admissions to hospital, and that the service had supported medication management.

The success of the project means a total of 210 telehealth systems are proposed for 2012/13, and extrapolating existing results based on a deployment rate of 80% suggests net savings of over £158,000 in addition to clinical and quality of life benefits.

Fred's story

“Fred” is an 80 year old man with Heart Failure and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease who experienced regular hospital admissions due to acute exacerbation (worsening of his condition). His GP practitioner felt that Fred's frequent admissions were largely due to a lack of compliance with his medication regime and did not believe anything more could be done to reduce them.

Fred agreed to receive the telehealth service and as a result it was discovered that steroids were used briefly to treat his exacerbations and then withdrawn. After reviewing the information, a change in the steroid regime was made and use of the telehealth system helped Fred to take his medication properly. Since the telehealth installation and the changes in medication management, Fred has not suffered any further exacerbations or required a non-elective admission to hospital.

For further information on the evaluation of telehealth in East Riding visit

www.centrefortelehealth.org

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