

## **Telemedicine Scheme update: 2020/21**

The Telemedicine scheme has been providing a service in 30 care homes with and without nursing. The service provided by Immedicare has been running in Leeds since 2017.

The service provides care homes with access to a qualified clinician via video link 24 hours a day seven days a week, and is provided by Immedicare - a joint partnership between Airedale NHS Foundation Trust and Involve, an audio visual integration company. The service was initially funded by NHS England as part of a programme to test the impact it, and similar interventions, had on emergency hospital admissions. Since the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019 the service was operational across 30 care homes in Leeds. From April 2020, there will be an additional 30 care homes providing a service over the COVID-19 emergency period. The service will be offered on a 24/7/365 basis to all 60 care homes until the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, based on an average of 4 calls per month per care home ( 240 calls across the 60 homes over a 6 month period)<sup>1</sup>

The service enables care home staff to contact a clinical hub for advice and support with regard to residents' health issues; calls can be made by telephone or Skype, enabling the staff at the hub to be able to speak to and assess residents remotely.

The purpose of the service is to improve quality and experience for residents, help avoid unnecessary or inappropriate calls to emergency services, ambulance transportation and hospital attendances. Other benefits also include;

- I Reduced GP workload
- II. Impact on care home staff who use the service seeking reassurance
- III. Reduced impact on care home manager workload, as staff defer to the service instead of ringing them when they are off-duty

Immedicare is a provider of clinical healthcare services, delivered via telemedicine. Through their digital care hub they support, advise and connect patients, carers, nurses and clinicians across a full range of healthcare specialties and clinical needs. Services include a digital health hub, which operates on a 24/7/365 basis. The digital health hub enables clinicians and others involved in healthcare provision to respond to and assist patients remotely in real-time, via the use of video-based teleconsultation technologies.

Care homes are able to call the hub for clinical advice via an audio visual link which enables real-time visual consultation and assessment of care home residents. Immedicare provide (on a loan basis) the equipment to the homes as part of the contract.

The CCG has continued to commission and extend Telemedicine with care homes, a list of these can be viewed on the following link <https://www.leedscgg.nhs.uk/about/covid-19-primary-care/resources-for-professionals/care-homes/>

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<sup>1</sup> The service has been extended to cover 60 care homes 24/7 to support general practice during the Covid-19 emergency response period; initial extension is for 6 months

**The evaluation carried out in 2019 outlined the following:**

-Perception of the telemedicine service in care homes is very positive from staff, management and residents, where they remember using the service. This positive perception seems to be relatively unaffected by if the home uses the service regularly or not.

-Anecdotal evidence suggests that both residential and nursing homes value the service, but adoption in residential homes is better than in nursing homes. At the time the evaluation was written six homes had uninstalled the technology and all six of these were nursing homes.

-Evidence suggests that the homes use the system more as a replacement for primary care contacts, than secondary or emergency care.

-The evaluation suggested that care homes that made regular use of the Telemedicine services saw a small reduction in the use of emergency services such as 111, out of hours health and care services and, potentially, attendances at A&E and non-elective admissions to hospital. However, the evidence suggests that the service would not reduce these levels of activity enough to make any significant savings- though this piece did not include a formal economic evaluation.

Over the emergency period the telemedicine service will be able to support the practice team who proactively manage the care of residents in care homes which will include management of COVID-19 symptoms and work in partnership to alleviate the practice workload.

Future model

The ambition is to have all care homes having access to a clinical digital solution in the future. The future model is being developed for a solution to be in place post 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. This will align with national specifications such as the Enhanced Health and Care Home Framework and other national drivers with the ambition of an integrated clinical digital solution model across the city.