

# INTEGRATED DIGITAL CARE RECORD

## Success Story Nursing Technology Fund

Devon Partnership NHS Trust  
May 2015

NHS England administers the Nursing Technology Fund on behalf of the Department of Health.

### THE CHALLENGE

Devon Partnership NHS Trust provides Learning Disability and Mental Health services to over 18,000 people in Devon and Torbay, where face to face contact is crucial in providing effective services.

Prior to the Nursing Technology Fund award, only Speech and Language Therapists and Occupational Therapists had access to iPads, but had reported great results, observing noticeable improvements in self-esteem, confidence and involvement from people with learning disabilities. Utilising handheld technology in order to better support people appropriately was the key driver behind the successful application to the Nursing Technology Fund.

### BENEFITS TO NURSES

The positive reaction from people with a learning disability when care givers utilised iPads prompted the move to procure devices for all nurses within the Trust. Roll out followed a phased approach with users trialling the most appropriate free apps to test their suitability. Following the trial of a variety of health, epilepsy, sensory, relaxation and communication apps, each department put forward their requests to buy relevant apps that they felt would benefit them.

The use of Skype to facilitate face to face meetings has cut down on travelling time, meaning nurses can spend more time working alongside individuals. Sat Nav and diary make workloads more streamlined and the ability to access and respond to emails on the move reduces the need to return to the office.

The nursing team is enjoying a far more flexible approach to their working practice and have been wholly positive in their adoption of the mobile technology.

### BENEFITS TO PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

The wide range of applications available, both to buy and free of charge, allows nurses to be more creative and to put people with a learning disability right at the centre of their own care. Interactive maps encourage engagement and curiosity, whilst film-making, music and writing apps can be used to create dynamic journals which provide a sense of accomplishment and can record progression.

Individuals enjoy support whilst using these apps and being involved by nurses as their assessment forms are completed. Using technology for both clinical and therapeutic activities is having a positive effect for people with a learning disability and feedback forms report their increased feelings of control and involvement in the provision of care. This is all made possible by the accessibility and usability of the iPads.

### LESSONS LEARNED

Despite the smooth running of the project and the positive reaction from both staff, and the people they care for, the project was not without some minor hitches. Having purchased the iPads, the Trust discovered that there were issues with the licencing of mobile device management software and the setting up of corporate Apple accounts which could have been sorted out beforehand. 3G access was also more sporadic than originally envisaged which affected how the devices have been deployed. Having members of the IT department allocated to the nurses for support helped immensely though, they were able to assist with setting up the devices, installing and using apps and making sure that the nurses knew exactly what was available.

# FUTURE

With the endless possibilities that iPads present for both clinical and therapeutic care provision, Devon Partnership NHS Trust are looking forward to getting even more value from their investment and enabling the nursing team to work more closely with the other members of the multidisciplinary team.

An app for accessing the Trust's new Care Notes clinical record is anticipated towards the end of the year, and this remote access to the notes will bring even greater flexibility and efficient working practices.

'The iPad gave the lady with a learning disability who was in hospital something to focus on and achieve. We interacted positively and she gained my trust. I went home jubilant because the lady was so animated and felt much brighter when we engaged together. It made my weekend.'

# IN A NUTSHELL

## **SOLUTION:**

iPads for every Learning Disability nurse working within the Trust

## **FUNDING**

Nursing Technology Fund 1

## **BENEFITS TO NURSES**

Increased face to face time with people with a learning disability who use the service. Improved flexibility and productivity.

## **BENEFITS TO PATIENTS**

User friendly technology which puts patients in control, at the centre of their care.

## **BENEFITS TO TRUST**

Improved outcomes for people who use the service

## **RESULT**

Every learning disability nurse successfully using an iPad for clinical and therapeutic use.

"Even though the project went really smoothly, I would strongly advise other Trusts who are thinking of introducing mobile technology to support people with a learning disability, to involve people who use the service as early as possible. This would have been really beneficial for us in terms of choosing which apps to invest in, and which would be the most popular and therapeutic."

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