

Volume 13, 20 November 2013

Publisher: Igitur publishing

URL: <http://www.ijic.org>

Cite this as: Int J Integr Care 2013; T&T Conf Suppl; [URN:NBN:NL:UI:10-1-115673](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:nl:ui:10-1-115673)

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Conference Abstract

Making telehealth a success in a complex environment: implementing telehealth in Wessex between 2011 and 2013

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Abstract

The Wessex Health Innovation and Education Cluster (HIEC) programme included a commitment to promote the use and uptake of telecare and telehealth in the region. A marker of success established in April 2011 was for more telehealth to be deployed in Wessex either directly or indirectly as a result of HIEC interventions. The work stream was discussed and developed at a conference of senior health and social care leaders in June 2011. The key objectives they identified were

- Demonstrations of effective telehealth services
- Provide networking opportunities and shared learning experiences
- Developing inter organisational and integrated systems
- Promotional events and workshops

In establishing these objectives a number of barriers to implementation were identified:

- costs being accrued in one organisation while the savings went to another,
- fear of data being lost or misused,
- a fractured market,
- limited proof of savings along with additional costs to set up a new service
- leadership – changes in the commissioning landscape
- cultural.

The HIEC established a number of work streams and in the last two years has run over 16 events, managed a regular newsletter and provided local consultancy and advice to address these issues. This work has included conferences, workshops, education sessions, bi-weekly newsletters, academic sessions, work with industry on topics such as procurement, bringing key partners together to work on integration and service development.

International Congress on Telehealth and Telecare 2013, London, July 01-03, 2013.

This paper will review the outcomes from this work and identify the most useful methods for enabling local telehealth/care take up by local services, and addressing the key challenges posed by the adoption of telehealth/care technology.

The paper will give examples of the work it has completed such as a series of seminars on topics relating to implementation, work that is in progress such as a project with a local acute trust to raise awareness among clinicians and managers of the opportunities around telehealth and work that may be undertaken under the auspices of the emerging Academic Health Science Network (AHSN) to use information and information systems to transform health and deliver better outcomes.

The key findings will discuss:

- How telehealth/care has become more formally recognised in the region
- The importance of networking skills and interests across the region
- The role of sharing information and expertise
- Enabling links with telehealth/care providers away from the direct procurement interface
- The development of specialised training materials
- The problems with current procurement exercises
- Difficulties in managing the roll-out of local programmes
- The opportunities created by new internet based telehealth/care services
- The linkage to the 'Digital by Default' programme

The paper will conclude with recommendations based on these findings of how telehealth and telecare can be more effectively promoted, managed and delivered in the future.

Keywords:

implementation, telehealth, education, nhs,

Presentation available at: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/third-annual-international-congress-telehealth-and-telecare>