Conference Abstract

Transforming the outpatient experience through the use of assistive technology

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Abstract

The Assistive Technology Commissioning Team forms part of the joint commissioning between health and social care in Buckinghamshire. The team is located in the county council and is responsible for telecare and telehealth. With a limited budget the team has to work innovatively with the aim to increase the use of technology in health and social care settings. To do this the team is working in partnership with provider organizations to assist them in change. Service transformation as we move forward should be digital by default and the Assistive Technology strategy is to ensure a joined up use from primary care through to secondary care of the high volume low cost technologies already available.

'Transforming the outpatient experience through the use of assistive technology' is one example of close partnership working with the local acute secondary care trust.

The Aim of the project is to reduce the need for face-to-face outpatient activity by the appropriate use of alternative means of patient contact, enabled by technology. The project is managed by the commissioner but is very closely linked into the providers' wider outpatient transformation project board.

The principles of the project are to adopt patient facing, clinically driven solutions. The project is clinically driven with GP clinical advisor from the commissioner engaging from the start with the lead clinicians in the trust. The aim is to create clinical champions to drive change within their own organization. Along side this, in partnership with the trust but also with other organizations such as Healthwatch, patient engagement is the other priority: Are the changes acceptable to patients and what are the perceived barriers will help balance the ideas of the clinicians.

With possible solutions in mind and through close working with the trust managers and IT Director and other commissioners we then aim to establish projects within outpatients to prove the concepts. We are not going to reinvent the wheel but explore options already in practice around the country/the world. In achieving success within the practice of the clinical champions we hope that this will encourage other clinicians and service delivery units to adopt similar solutions.

The objective of the wider outpatient project within the trust is to reduce outpatient face-to-face activity by 12% in 1 year. We hope to be integral part to the trust achieving this and in doing so prove that partnership working between commissioner and providers can be a model for the future to take into other projects.

In conclusion we aim to challenge the myth that technology is a barrier by demonstrating that it is an invisible tool to enable good clinical practice in a modern patient facing healthcare service.

Keywords