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Conference abstract

An integrated approach to implementing telehealth and telecare in Carmarthenshire

Leo Lewis, Project Director, Carmarthenshire CCM Demonstrator, Hywel Dda Health Board, UK

Keir Lewis, Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Hywel Dda Health Board and Senior Lecturer, Swansea University College of Medicine, UK

Correspondence to: Leo Lewis, E-mail: leo.lewis2@wales.nhs.uk

Abstract

Sequential UK governments have referred to the huge potential for telehealth and telecare to help people live independently and manage their chronic conditions. One reason why these benefits for both citizens and the public sector have yet to have a good evidence base could be the service delivery models within which these technologies have been implemented.

We are evaluating the cost-effectiveness elements of a 24-month, cross-over randomised controlled trial of telehealth technologies. The service is being undertaken jointly between our Local Health Board's respiratory telehealth team together with the Council's Telecare Team and monitoring centre.

We are comparing two telehealth devices in 240 patients with COPD, to see if telehealth reduces costs to the NHS in terms of emergency admissions, lengths of stay, A&E attendances, GP practice and community COPD specialist nurse consultations; it will also assess any differences in quality of life.

In addition, we are assessing information on the costs of installing the devices, training patients, and remote monitoring; comparing two models; where the telecare team respond directly to technical issues and incomplete data leaving the clinical team to act only on medical alerts compared to a delivery model using specialist nursing staff for all monitoring.

Keywords

telehealth, telemedicine, telemonitoring, COPD, remote, economic
