

case study



Sector: EU health and social care

Partners: Milton Keynes Council, Tunstall Healthcare, Empirica, Intersystems

Subject: Integration of health and social care services

Dilemma

Currently telehealth operates independently of the Council's Telecare/community alarm service with no automated link between the two services and the systems that are used. This means that two sets of data can be held about an individual but this data is not shared, and without manual intervention this could lead to an incomplete patient profile and duplication of work.

CommonWell is an EU funded project designed to address the interoperability of services and information sharing between health and social care.

This case study discusses the issues faced and focuses on one of the CommonWell streams – how Milton Keynes Council is aiming to tackle integrated working head on.

“This is an important project for the EU because it addresses the challenging issue of interworking between social services and health care. We support projects like CommonWell to get the results of innovative new technologies and services to consumers faster, to help improve the quality of life.”

Paul Timmers, head of the European Commission's 'ICT for Inclusion' Unit

All the reassurance you need

Tunstall



“We are starting to join up information from different systems in order to get a more holistic view of the client and tailor the support offer. A health and social care system that talks to each other enables us to give a much better response to needs.”

What is CommonWell?

CommonWell stands for “Common Platform Services for Ageing Well in Europe” and is a three year EU funded project which began in October 2008, spanning 5 countries and 12 partners. It is funded by the EC Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme and will result in 400 users across four locations in Europe receiving newly integrated services for 12 months.

Objectives of the Milton Keynes Pilot

To improve the communication between health and social care providers, helping to reduce anxiety and improve health outcomes for people with chronic conditions and those who need support when leaving hospital.

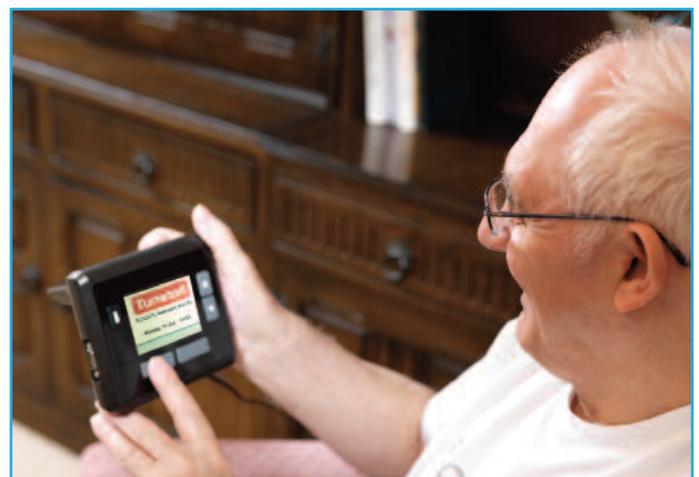
The needs that will be addressed during the CommonWell project, from a health care, social care and end-user perspective are:

1. The expansion of the Telehealth Service for patients with long-term conditions, primarily COPD.
2. To integrate and combine health and social care data that is accessible in one view to provide a more integrated approach and a more complete picture of patient data.
3. To increase quality of life for patients with long term conditions by improving patient confidence and education and reducing hospital admissions through the use of daily vital signs monitoring equipment.
4. To develop processes for 7 day monitoring and response to “red alerts” that can be passed to the appropriate clinician without delay to support patients if their condition deteriorates outside of ‘normal’ working hours.
5. To link the Telehealth Service to the wider pathways for LTC management to test effectiveness by supporting patients who have previously had frequent unplanned hospital admissions or who are discharged home early under Early Supported Discharge.

Specific issues in Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes Council Community Alarm Service is a 24/7 operation with links to other out of hours services but clinical support and intervention to telehealth readings is only a Monday to Friday service. If a patient takes their readings outside of office hours these readings will not be looked at or actioned until the next working day. This potentially means that a hospital admission may be necessary.

Patients who have long term conditions such as COPD may also benefit from other telecare equipment such as fall detectors or environmental sensors to enable them to remain independent and able to live at home. Currently because the patient information is kept on two separate systems there is no comprehensive co-ordination or assessment of need as this is managed by two separate teams.



CommonWell gives us the opportunity to test the equipment on a much larger scale than would have been possible before, enabling the clinical teams to do their own triaging through a web-based system."

Sandra Rankin, Programme Lead for Social Care Reform, Milton Keynes Council

Potential benefits of the new system

Quality of life benefits

- Hospital admission avoidance
- Empowered and informed service users and patients
- Better support in critical situations and early intervention and prevention
- Support for families and carers of patients with LTCs

Quality of service benefits

- Faster response to client requests
- More targeted response to client requests
- Complete data accessed on one system instead of two
- Data available to clinicians via web based application

Efficiency of service benefits

- Decreased number of face-to-face visits to clients for health and social care staff
- Increased efficiency of data exchange
- Reduced hospital admission costs
- Opportunities for early discharge from hospital
- Reduction in call outs to GPs and urgent care facilities

CommonWell will deliver ICT-enabled health and social care services, addressing issues which affect independence. Tunstall Healthcare is leading the technical work and developing innovative and practical solutions.

Case study

The blood pressure results for a lady with COPD exceeded the variants set by her clinical team and a "red alert" was displayed on the telehealth system. By having access to data from her telecare system it was now possible to see if there were any incidents in the last few days, such as a fall in the night, therefore providing a much more detailed picture of the client, enabling the team to tailor the intervention more efficiently. The information obtained from this non-clinical triage is passed to the relevant clinician to provide a more specific response and has proven to avoid an unnecessary hospital admission by prompt intervention and more complete patient information.

What are the next steps?

Tunstall and Milton Keynes are currently evaluating the pilot system and testing all elements of the consolidated client record from both a telecare and telehealth perspective. Next year the customer trial with 100 clients/patients will commence for 12 months. The **WRC** research centre will evaluate the work.



Overall CommonWell aims

To support independent living for older people and those with long-term conditions, integrating and evaluating healthcare and social care services, significantly improving the quality of life for individuals and their families.

CommonWell Partners

UK



INTERSYSTEMS

Tunstall

Ireland



Germany



Netherlands



Spain



 CommonWell

For further details on CommonWell and the other pilot projects please visit www.commonwell.eu or call 01977 660206



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