

Managing long term conditions with telehealth

Patient survey results – June 2012

Postal questionnaire sent to 270 telehealth patients with 143 respondents

Overview of telehealth in Gloucestershire

In 2011, NHS Gloucestershire established a fully managed telehealth service for 2,000 patients over a three year period. The service went live in November 2011 and currently provides a managed system of care and response to over 300 patients (at July 2012).

The service is provided in partnership with Tunstall Healthcare and includes a full implementation team to support the deployment, clinical engagement, pathway optimisation and monitoring of the patient systems.

This is the most successful and largest GP referring programme in the UK to date, with 88% of all GP practices in NHS Gloucestershire actively referring patients. Telehealth forms an integral part of the PCT's Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) programme to deliver financial savings and more effective care closer to home and to avoid unnecessary interventions.

Patient Feedback

In June 2012 we conducted our first telehealth patient survey to determine whether the service is fully meeting patient needs and if they are happy with the service provision. The results were excellent, with 89% of respondents saying they would recommend telehealth to others and 88% who considered that the service provision was excellent or good.

However, the aim of the survey was not only to determine where we are doing a good job but also to find out where we can further improve and develop the service and tailor it where possible to meet the individual needs of patients.

"I am happy with the system. It has taken away lots of niggling worries and has helped me to understand how my body works. I have not visited my Doctor this past winter."

The highlights

The survey results were extremely positive:

77% (108) thought telehealth gave them peace of mind and reduced anxiety

88% thought the service was excellent (82 patients) or good (40 patients)

89% (126) would recommend it to others

77% (104) thought it helped their GP better manage their condition(s)

68% (93) thought it helped them better manage their condition(s) themselves



"This is invaluable to me as it helps me keep control of my condition. Quite often I get worse slowly and don't recognise this until I end up at hospital for a visit or stay. This is the best equipment I have had for my health in years - long may it continue."

Why telehealth in Gloucestershire?

There are 600,000 people living in Gloucestershire, 6,000 of whom have a long-term condition such as heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes or coronary heart disease.

- 5% of the population account for half of all stays in hospital
- In 2010/11 the above four primary diagnoses generated 4,386 emergency admissions, a 4% increase on 2009/10
- These admissions cost approximately £13.7m in 2010/11, an increase from £12.8m in 2009/10

For future sustainability, we need to address rapidly rising secondary care costs in the four main disease areas whilst ensuring that there is no consequent reduction in quality.

Patient selection

The programme is aimed at patients with any long-term condition (including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic heart failure (CHF), coronary heart disease (CHD) and diabetes). For such patients, a timely response will help manage their short and medium term care needs, improving their outcomes and helping to reduce the number of hospital admissions.

Although the project is largely focused on managing patients through primary care, partners across the health sector are also involved, including out of hours services, hospitals (both acute and community), mental health services and community care services.

We are currently exploring how best to align the service to an existing Adult Social Care telecare programme.

Lessons Learned

We believe it is very important to consult with patients and clinicians regularly and request feedback on the service we are providing to patients in Gloucestershire so that we can further develop our telehealth provision. We have learned a number of lessons during the early implementation of the service and have constantly reviewed and revised our programme of telehealth delivery where necessary.

Our recent patient survey was the first in a regular programme of patient and GP consultation that will feed in to the continuous review and development of our service provision.

Whilst it is early in the programme, feedback has been extremely positive, however, some areas were highlighted as being in need of attention.

An outcome of the survey will be for us to further improve communication with patients and their GPs and strengthen the areas that our patients thought could be further improved or in need of further development.

We will:

- Produce and distribute a regular patient newsletter – to update and inform patients, provide useful health tips and information and include patient feedback
- Initiate wider engagement with patient forums and create additional patient literature (including case studies and FAQs)

“Improve communication!”

“There were a few teething problems with SPO2 and thermometer but it's working alright now. I appreciate the phone calls showing your concern about my health.”

Survey Results

The following results are based on the number of people who answered each question:

What are your main long-term conditions? (multiple choice)

COPD	54% (77)
Heart Condition	42% (60)
Diabetes	22% (32)

Do you think Telehealth has been of benefit to you in the following areas?

Peace of mind and reduced anxiety

Yes	77% (108)
No	11% (15)
Don't know	12% (17)

Better understanding of my condition

Yes	72% (98)
No	18% (24)
Don't know	10% (14)

Better management of my condition by my GP

Yes	77% (104)
No	9% (12)
Don't know	14% (19)

Better management of my condition by me (e.g. helped me follow my care plan)

Yes	68% (93)
No	17% (23)
Don't know	15% (21)

Improved your quality of life

Yes	44% (61)
No	31% (43)
Don't know	25% (34)

Less likely to need to contact / go see your Doctor/Nurse

Yes	73.5% (104)
No	18% (26)
Don't know	8.5% (12)

Benefitted your partner / carer / family

Yes	83% (82)
No	9% (9)
Don't know	8% (8)

Helped you avoid going into hospital

Yes	59% (82)
No	13% (18)
Don't know	28% (38)

Would you recommend Telehealth to another patient with a long term condition

Yes	89% (126)
No	3% (5)
Don't know	8% (11)

What is your overall opinion of the Telehealth service?

Excellent	59% (82)
Good	29% (40)
Satisfactory	11% (15)
Poor	1% (2)

Do you think the Telehealth Service could be improved?

Yes	23% (32)
No	33% (47)
Don't know	44% (62)



“As my wife is very disabled, I do not like to be away from home too much. This service is clearly a big help in reducing the necessity of frequent visits to the surgery or hospital. Thank you!”

Gloucestershire patient

“The beauty of telehealth is that it enables patients to understand their condition a lot better and it allows the care system to be more proactive. The results of this survey show that patients agree that telehealth helps us to pick up on issues at an earlier stage, allowing them to get on with things they want to do.”

Dr Will Haynes, GP and CCG member

“Installing telehealth gives patients valuable feedback and allows them to think differently about their condition. Clinically, having the benefit of viewing results on a daily basis and using this in conjunction with careful assessment, allows a more tailored approach to care and treatment. Initial results are very positive from using telehealth in Gloucestershire.”

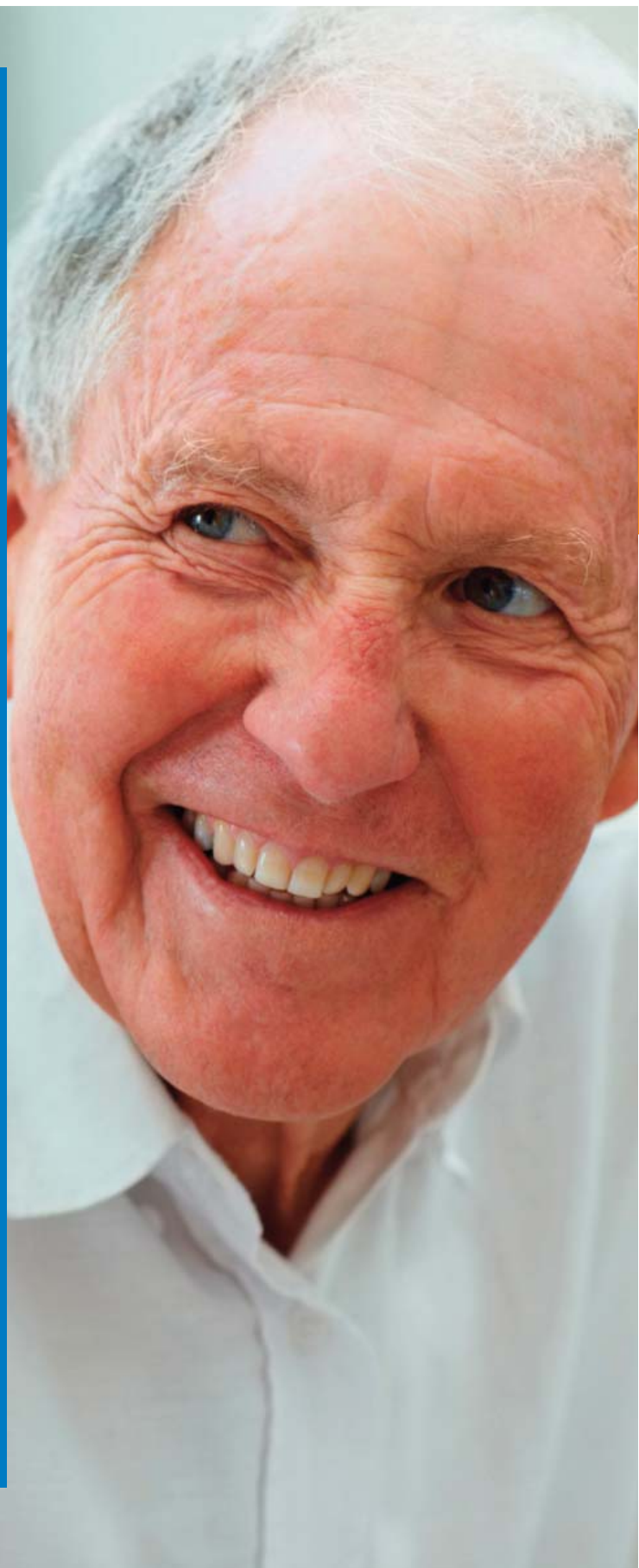
Dr Hugh van't Hoff, Gloucestershire GP

“I feel telehealth gives the patient a level of security in the knowledge that someone is keeping an eye on them. As a nurse it uses skills I have already to support the patient remotely. It's preparing the way for the future of healthcare.”

Corrine Parry, Practice Nurse, Stonehouse Health Clinic

“Telehealth technology complements a range of services NHS Gloucestershire is providing to help people with long term conditions. It is playing a key role in empowering patients to understand and manage their condition and is helping reduce consultations, emergency call-outs and referrals to hospital. Clinicians and patients alike are benefitting from the service, and it has the potential to help many more people.”

Linda Prosser, Commissioning Director, NHS Gloucestershire



For further information about telehealth, speak to your healthcare professional.

If you would like this document in a different format, for example large print, audio CD, Braille or in another language, please contact the NHS Gloucestershire GUIDe & PALS team on 0800 0151 548.

