Connecting People to Improve Care

During the COVID-19 outbreak it has never been more important for carers, social care professionals and clinicians to be able to communicate with each other and the people they care for as effectively and securely as possible.

This guide outlines some of the key ways you can access and use technology to improve communication between your residents and health and social care professionals.

We know that Care Homes will be at very different stages on their technology journey and some may need extra help implementing innovations. The Design and Learning Centre is able to support your needs and can signpost to information and training – get in touch with them via designandlearningcentre@kent.gov.uk

A number of webinars are planned for June and July on key topics such as video consultations and Microsoft Teams. We will let you know dates once confirmed. If you want to go on a mailing list please email designandlearningcentre@kent.gov.uk, and we'll keep you updated.

NHS Mail

Secure communication between health and social care services is now more important than ever. To support this a fast track implementation of NHSmail to the care sector, without the need to complete the Data Security and Protection Toolkit, has been put in place.

This is available to all Care Homes - you do not have to hold a contract with the NHS or Social Care.

Using NHS mail provides evidence to support elements of the Safe, Effective & Well Led KLOE's (Key Lines of Enquiry).

How to register:

1. Complete this form: Social Care Provider NHSmail Form.

a. You must complete and send this back in Word - it won't work if you print it out and fill in by hand.
b. You should provide mobile phone numbers not landlines as you will get a text with your password.
c. If you are a head office applying for multiple sites, complete the same form and provide the Organisation Data Service code of each site. If you do not know your ODS codes you can look them up at https://odsportal.hscic.gov.uk/Organisation/Search or contact the NHS Digital helpdesk at exeter.helpdesk@nhs.net to request for them to be sent to you.

2. Send the form to care.registration@nhs.net

3. You will get an email back in a couple of minutes to say your application is being processed. If there is a problem with the form you will also get an email back.

4. Within 1-2 days, you will receive an email from NHSmail welcoming you to your new account, as well as a text message with your password. Each provider will have one shared mailbox and two user accounts.

Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams allows you to conduct video and audio calls, as well as send instant messages and find and share documents with anyone else who has an nhs.net email account.

Once you have an NHSmail account you can sign in with that email address.

How to access Teams

1. In your internet browser, go to teams.microsoft.com
2. Log in using your new NHSmail email address and password

Video consultations

GP surgeries are now starting to use video consultations. Holding a video consultation is like a face-to-face appointment but means the GP does not have to visit your care home to give advice or write a prescription.

Most GP surgeries in Kent are using AccuRx. If the GP is using AccuRx for a video consultation they will send a meeting link to a smart mobile phone. Therefore, for this to work you will need the following:

- A smartphone, either with working Wi-Fi/3G/4G connection
- Your Internet Browser needs to have your phone's microphone and camera enabled (you can see how to alter this in your phone settings here). You might also need to make sure you are using a supported browser.

- iPhones running older software that has not been updated (iOS 12 and earlier) will need to download the [Whereby](#) app to join the consultation)

This link shows you a step by step guide on how AccuRx video consultations work: https://support.accurx.com/en/articles/3790662-my-gp-has-sent-me-a-video-link

You may want to consider putting a named person, or team, in charge of video consultations. Choose someone who is comfortable with the tech, as this will help everyone involved get the most out of the sessions.

Some key points to remember:

- Make sure that the device (smart phone or tablet when available) is kept **free from infection risk** as much as possible (please refer to your infection control guidance0.
- Make sure that the **resident consents** to the consultation if they have capacity and that they are happy for the care home worker to be present / facilitate the consultation.
- Make sure that the video takes place in an appropriate place with as much **confidentiality** as possible – also quiet, calm and without interruptions.
- The **care worker may act as the link**, especially if the resident is hard of hearing or has difficulty understanding.
- If the care home has the facilities, then **basic monitoring** such as blood pressure / pulse / pulse oximeter / temperature may make the clinical decisions more accurate.

Internet connection deals for care homes

You may need to improve your internet connection to use technology more during COVID-19. This link takes you to the internet deals that have been secured by the NHS for care homes https://www.nhsx.nhs.uk/covid-19-response/social-care/internet-connection-deals-care-homes/
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For further information:

The AHSN Network has a range of [Patient Safety resources for care homes](#)

https://www.digitalsocialcare.co.uk/ - this website is funded by the NHS, run by providers for providers. Dedicated space to provide technology support to providers. Digital Social Care has set up helpline for the duration of COVID-19. Call us on 0208 133 3430 (Mon-Fri 9-5) or email help@digitalsocialcare.co.uk for free support