



**Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme**
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Assistive Technology Centre



RemoAge
REMOTE SUPPORT OF AGED PEOPLE

Western Isles Assistive Technology Centre

T1.4 Flexible support of family carers

T1.1 Remote activity support in the homes.

T1.2 Remote supervision day and nighttime

T1.3 Remote multi-professional support

T1.8 Early identification of dementia

Summary

The Assistive Technology Centre is designed to;

-integrate Assistive Technology (AT) within the mainstream assessment and support planning processes for adult health and social care to maximize people's ability to continue to live independently.

- Support the public to understand the help that can be provided by AT and encourage 'self-serve' work in partnership to ensure that AT are more widely accessible, acceptable and understood by all those who could benefit.

- Increase the uptake of AT services by communicating the potential benefits to service users and carers and by providing AT opportunities in a diverse range of existing service settings across health, housing and social care.

Typology of Impacts

Tangible impacts

Improved access to services

Cost savings

Time savings

Reduced energy consumption

Reduced environmental impact

Business development

Job creation

Improved competitiveness

Other tangible impacts (specify)

Intangible impacts

Building institutional capacity

Raising awareness

Changing attitudes and behavior

Influencing policies

Improving social cohesion

Leveraging synergies

Other intangible impacts

Contact

NHS Western Isles

<http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/>

*Health Board Offices, 37 South Beach Street, Stornoway,
Isle of Lewis, HS1 2BB*

Contact person

Elaine MacKay

Planning Officer, NHS Western Isles

elainemackay@nhs.net

+44 (0) 1851708035

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Service end users

Users and carers, Health and care staff across all disciplines.

Challenge

The deliveries of health care to integrated 'health and care', geographical and organisational boundaries are being challenged. In addition, dependency on partnering will become more critical, between providers, with commissioners and other partners such as social care, the third sector and the public themselves. All the time, while this shift is occurring,

The backdrop of cost pressures and subsequent need for efficiencies remains a constant challenge. Meanwhile, industries and countries across the world are moving towards digitisation. As such, there has never been a better time to consider how digital technology can play a pivotal role. Service delivery in rural areas, and particularly issues around accessibility continue to present challenges for health and social care services. With the increasingly stretched supply of professionals, telehealth continues to be a crucial strategy for getting patients access to the healthcare they need.

However, most telehealth innovations struggle to survive beyond the pilot stage, despite being medically and technically viable solutions. Explanations for this failure identify cultural, organisational and workforce barriers to implementation. The objective of this pilot study was to contribute to health services research by examining how rural public health and social care institutions can sustainably adopt Assistive Technology (AT) telehealth innovations.

Service provider roles and Collaboration

- NHS Western Isles – Main provider of equipment and e- health project lead/health support staff ie OT staff
- Alzhimers Scotland – Support Partner

Service availability

This service is based in Stornoway with a smaller centre in Barra, Western Isles

Technology and tools

- Telecare – i.e. monitors and sensors, to promote independent living
- Digital participation services - to educate, entertain and stimulate social interaction

- Wellness services - to encourage people to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle, to prevent or delay the need for support assessment and early intervention through health monitoring.

Implementation process

The centre was operated on a drop in basis twice weekly and at other times was used as a demonstration space for specific staff training.

Skills, knowledge and competences

Respondents reported that technology allowed them to:

- Intervene early – behaviour trends could be analyzed in order to detect symptoms which may have a more serious underlying cause which requires intervention
- Consider telecare early on in the process to find the best possible matched solutions
- Reduce the need for unplanned care – putting personalization at the centre of all support plans.

Risks and Solutions found

Need for change in culture and strong leadership - a recognition of the sense of urgency to support a change in practice; cognizant as increased demands, financial challenges and new models of care necessitate this.

- Data sharing and access - Implementation through whole system structural processes, information sharing and effective procurement.
- Connectivity.
- Access to appropriate technology and devices.
- Skills development both staff and public – education and training are critical, recognizing that failure to support staff impacts upon confidence.
- The professional acceptance of technology is key for use in distinct rural geographical areas, and the acceptance of potential change within roles.
- Self-management/empowerment.

Communication and dissemination

The 'mixed economy' landscape, with private AT provision supplementing state provision, is key for the mainstreaming of AT services. Data suggests that more participants are using 'off the shelf' technology purchased privately rather than via health and social care services. Health and Social care require an integrated approach to adoption of digital technologies to address rural health inequalities, through sharing of best practice and a systematic approach to remote and rural healthcare models. Service Planners in particular reported learning by trial and error and that they lacked the knowledge, skills and experience to effectively commission for Assisted Living Technology. In addition there is a need to commission effectively on front-line staff, and in particular the resulting perception that technology is a bolt on to core services; the consequence of which may be a reluctance to use the technology.

Service longevity

The project will be taken forward through the e-health and integration work at NHS Western Isles

Output metrics

- A number of open days where people completed pre and post event feedback to highlight their user acceptability of technologies.
- Feedback from those who took equipment to test.

Tangible impacts

Improved access to services

Through use of technology has allowed people to maintain social contact and to work around families' fear of someone living independently.

Cost savings

Time and money saved for not using transport

Time savings

As above

Intangible impacts

Building institutional capacity

Building a confidence and capacity in our staff to be able to use technologies to sit alongside their own work.

Raising awareness

Of the use of technologies and its variance in simplicity.

Changing attitudes and behavior

As above

Influencing policies

As above

Photo from the Western Isles Assistive Technology Centre



Video

Video describing Service: <https://vimeo.com/167817734>

Interview with Western Isles project: <https://youtu.be/M3LGVB3MywE>

Western Isles Project presentation: https://youtu.be/ZuUWMR-iBNY?list=PLloS7TUd1_xWXSCLBEmCfbN_Olrr4bW_i

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