

Volume 13, 20 November 2013

Publisher: Igitur publishing

URL: <http://www.ijic.org>

Cite this as: Int J Integr Care 2013; T&T Conf Suppl; URN: [URN:NBN:NL:UI:10-1-115657](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:nl:ui:10-1-115657)

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Conference Abstract

## **Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council - improving efficiency and outcomes through telehealthcare**

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### **Abstract**

**Introduction:** Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council faces significant demographic challenges including above average numbers of people with long-term conditions and mental health issues and high admissions to residential care. The Council needed to address these issues in order to manage current and future demand, and improve outcomes for local people. At the same time, budget efficiencies meant considerable savings needed to be made from the social care budget. Having reviewed a range of options, the Council set objectives for supporting more people to remain independent at home by increasing its use of telehealthcare.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

- Increase the number of telecare users from 60 to 1,800 within three years
- Reduce/delay residential care admissions
- Incorporate telecare into the reablement process to reduce re-admissions to hospital
- Provide support to carers, improving their health and wellbeing
- Achieve overall savings of £1.9m

The adult social care department was charged with making efficiencies of £6.6 million (the equivalent of 15% of the controllable spend) during the 2011-12 financial year, making the need to deliver better for less even more pressing.

**Methods:** Working in partnership with Tunstall and Care Services Efficiency Delivery programme (CSED), the Council put in place a 'hearts and minds' engagement/change management programme for stakeholders, identifying barriers to the successful implementation of the telecare service and putting in place plans to overcome them. Real life case examples were used as a powerful way of illustrating the benefits and impact of telecare to a wide and diverse range of stakeholders, and robust, transparent processes were put in place. It was also vital to integrate telecare into the community reablement process and rapid response service, creating a universally accessible service.

International Congress on Telehealth and Telecare 2013, London, July 01-03, 2013.

**Results:** The number of telecare service users in Blackburn with Darwen increased from 60 to 1,000 in little over 18 months.

The Council has undertaken an ongoing, robust evaluation of the service, tracking results by individual service users and reporting outcomes monthly and quarterly. The latest evaluation shows that residential care admissions have been reduced by 18% (or equivalent to 57 people) in 2011/12. Total net savings achieved are £2.2 million, £300,000 over the target set, made up of £1.4 million savings from the telecare and reablement service and a further £800,000 saved solely as a result of the telecare service.

## **Phase 2**

The Council has chosen to extend the service, working with Tunstall to provide telecare, telehealth and monitoring as part of a fully managed, large-scale service which is joint funded with the Council financing the telecare equipment element and NHS Blackburn with Darwen Teaching Care Trust Plus

financing telehealth, but the infrastructure is jointly managed and funded in order to ensure a holistic service to the end user.

## **Keywords:**

**telecare, social care, reablement, efficiency, outcomes**

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**Presentation** available at: <http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/events/third-annual-international-congress-telehealth-and-telecare>