

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Whole Systems Demonstrator?

The Whole Systems Demonstrator (WSD) programme was established by the Department of Health to evaluate how the use of telecare and telehealth can support people with long-term health and care needs to live independently. DH invested £31m in the two year research project which aimed to create the largest evidence base for telehealthcare in the country by evaluating how technology can help to:

- promote people's long term health and independence
- improve quality of life for people and their carers
- help people manage their own health and maintain their independence
- improve the working lives of health and social care professionals
- provide an evidence base for more cost and clinically effective ways of managing long term conditions.



Frequently Asked Questions

Where did the programme take place?

In May 2007, teams in Kent, Newham and Cornwall were awarded Department of Health funding to examine how best to implement telecare and telehealth services.

Cornwall

- The poorest county in England
- Population >500,000
- 10.3% of population aged 65+
- 21% of the population report a limiting long term illness

Kent

- Area of broad socio-economic variation
- Population 1.37m
- 17.3% of population aged 65+
- High levels of target illnesses (HF/COPD/Diabetes)

Newham

- One of the most deprived areas in the UK
- Population circa 300,000
- 8.5% of population aged 65+
- 17.3% of the population have a limiting long term illness

How big was the study?

The study covered 6,191 patients and 238 GP practices in the largest randomised control study of its kind in the world.

Who evaluated the programme?

A consortium of universities undertook an evaluation of the programme assessing its clinical and cost effectiveness:

- **University College London**
www.ucl.ac.uk
Professor Stan Newman (Principal Investigator),
Martin Peerson, Hirani Shashi
- **London School of Economics**
www.lse.ac.uk
Professor Martin Knapp, Catherine Henderson
- **University of Oxford**
www.ox.ac.uk
Professor Roy Fitzpatrick, Dr Helen Doll
- **University of Manchester**
www.manchester.ac.uk
Professor Anne Rogers, Dr Peter Bowers,

Dr Caroline Sanders

- **Imperial College London**
www.imperial.ac.uk
Professor James Barlow, Dr Jane Hendy,
Dr Richard Curry
- **Nuffield Trust**
www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk
Dr Jennifer Dixon, Professor John Billings, Professor
Michael Kenwood
- **University of Birmingham**
www.birmingham.ac.uk
Professor Chris Hann (Coordination Role)

How much was invested?

The Department of Health invested £31m in the WSD programme.

Which suppliers were involved?

Tunstall was the telecare solution supplier across all 3 sites. Telehealth solutions were supplied by Tunstall in Cornwall, Viterion in Kent and Philips in Newham.

What equipment was provided?

Telecare

Participants across all sites received a Tunstall Lifeline Connect or Connect+ base unit and personal pendant together with any number of appropriate sensors from the 27 available which can be classified into 4 broad categories:

- Personal health and wellbeing sensors (bed/ chair occupancy sensors, enuresis sensor, epilepsy sensor, fall detector, medication dispenser)
- Sensory impairment aids (big button telephone, wearable vibrating alert)
- Safety and security aids (bogus caller button, key safe)
- Environmental monitoring sensors (carbon monoxide detector, heat sensor, flood detector)

Telehealth Cornwall

Tunstall **my**medic home monitoring system, a small device with an LCD screen, response buttons to allow navigation of symptom questions and transmission of educational messages to participants, plus relevant peripherals to monitor vital signs.

What was the client base?

Evaluation focused on 3 groups across the 3 sites:

- Individuals with health care needs of any age who are at risk of current/future hospital admission, due to at least one of the following conditions: heart failure, COPD, diabetes
- Individuals with social care needs aged 18 and over
- Individuals with both health and social care needs as defined above

How was the programme evaluated?

- 6,000 service users in the evaluation in 4 groups
- 2 year evaluation period
- Intervention groups and control groups to assess the impact of Advanced Assistive Technology (AAT) in addition to 'usual care' i.e. both groups receive the same care and the only difference is that the intervention group are also receiving AAT
- Real time & pragmatic
- Cluster design: minimises administration when compared with individualised randomisation. Practices are basis for randomisation
- Randomised controlled trial: this guards against 'regression to the mean', whereby changes observed after an intervention would have occurred anyway

What were the themes of the evaluation?

Theme 1 – Service Utilisation

Does the introduction of telehealth and/or telecare result in reduction of utilisation and costs of care?

Theme 2 – Patient Outcomes

Does the introduction of telehealth and/or telecare result in improvements in patient outcomes?

Theme 3 – Cost Effectiveness

What are the economic consequences of introducing telehealth and telecare?

Theme 4 – Patient and Professional Experience

What are the experiences of users, carers and professionals to the introduction of telehealth/telecare?

Theme 5 – Service Delivery and Organisation

What organisational factors facilitate or impede the sustainable adoption and integration of telehealth/telecare?

Key Results

The WSD programme has provided many benefits:

- 45% reduction in mortality rates
- 20% reduction in emergency admissions
- 14% in elective admissions
- 14% reduction in bed days
- 8% reduction in tariff costs
- 15% reduction in A&E visits

- It has provided evidence to overcome barriers to wide scale adoption of telecare and telehealth
- It has provided an opportunity to build considerable expertise across central government and the health, social care, academic and supply sectors
- It has also helped to improve understanding of who is most likely to benefit from telecare and telehealth services
- It has helped to optimise the design of large scale services
- It has raised awareness of telecare and telehealth with health and social care providers and commissioners

What should I do next?

In order to realise the full potential of the WSD results, effective action must be taken at a local level in order to disseminate the evidence, raise awareness and maintain momentum by taking steps towards embedding telehealthcare into service delivery. One of the ways of achieving this is by holding a local event with relevant stakeholders to discuss how to progress towards mainstreaming. Tunstall offers a range of resources and support to help organisations embed telehealthcare into their service delivery models including the online resource centre and support from account managers. Telehealthcare Support Group and Healthcare Advisory Services.

Where can I get further information?

For further information on WSD visit Tunstall's dedicated resource website at

www.tunstallwsd.co.uk

or call Tunstall on 1800 611 528

Tunstall Healthcare is founder member of the Continua Healthcare Alliance

Tunstall

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