

Call for expressions of interest: Improving Deteriorating Patient Care in the Community

An opportunity for health and social care organisations within the UCLPartners geography to improve the experience and outcomes for people cared for in non-acute and community settings by up-skilling non-clinically trained staff to recognise, escalate and communicate the early signs of deterioration in a timely and appropriate fashion.

Organisations are invited to submit expressions of interest to test the Significant 7+ tool to detect the soft signs of deterioration and / or the Whzan digital telehealth solution to undertake clinical observations and calculate a NEWS2 score.

About UCLPartners

UCLPartners is one of the largest academic health science partnerships in the world, encompassing more than 40 health care providers and universities that together serve a population of 6 million people in London and surrounding areas. We are a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and support our partners to collaborate across a number of health and care settings. We share practical and evidence-based solutions as well as methods for building capability and supporting system change. We support partners to deliver work that will have the most positive impact on the health and wellbeing of patients and the local population. Our work is co-created with involvement from colleagues across the health and care system, including patients; service users; hospital, community, mental health and primary care providers; commissioners; academia; third sector; government and industry.

Background

Improving the identification and management of deteriorating patients is a major patient safety priority for the NHS, and every healthcare system in the world. Since 2010, UCLPartners has worked with its partner NHS organisations to improve the identification and management of deteriorating patients. From 2015-17, we worked across 21 teams in 13 hospitals to collectively improve the outcomes for patients with Sepsis and Acute Kidney Injury. More recently, we worked with the acute trusts in our region through our Deteriorating Patient Network programme, supporting national efforts to help teams to implement the latest version of the National Early Warning Score (NEWS2).

As part of our ongoing commitment to reduce avoidable harm for patients, we are now looking to extend our scope by testing a soft signs of deterioration approach and use of NEWS2 in non-acute and community settings. A significant number of individuals with complex needs receive care in the community: at home, in care homes or in specialised supported accommodation (for people with learning disabilities). This population often has high support needs and adverse safety events can quickly escalate. Ongoing care is delivered mostly by non-clinically trained care staff, who do not always have the confidence and competence to recognise physical deterioration in people they care for. Also, many staff feel undervalued, and support for their training and development varies¹. Empowering and equipping these staff with the skills and knowledge to recognise and escalate

deterioration appropriately is pivotal in preventing unnecessary hospital admissions, which can often be disruptive and unsettling for the elderly and people with learning disabilities.

The opportunity

The overall aim of the programme is to improve the experience and outcomes for people cared for in the community setting, who are either at risk or already experiencing physical deterioration, by improving the ability of non-clinically trained staff to recognise, escalate and communicate the early signs of deterioration in a timely and appropriate fashion.

To achieve this we are looking to work in partnership with a small number of organisations that commission and/or provide community health and social care services, such as Community Health Trusts (CHT), Local Authorities (LA) and/or Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), to implement two innovative approaches by educating and supporting non-clinically trained staff to:

- Use the Significant 7+ tool to detect the soft signs of deterioration, helping staff to assess the situation and escalate appropriately
- Use the Whzan telehealth solution to undertake clinical observations, calculate a NEWS2 score and respond quickly through appropriate escalation routes.

This will be coupled with developing improvements to structured communication to improve the effectiveness of handover between care staff and other health care professionals. Promoting a safety culture, developing a culture of continuous improvement and a community of best practice will also be part of the work.

An additional objective of the programme is to help understand the ways through which these interventions can improve care, and what adaptations might need to be made to implement them in different settings and contexts. We will evaluate the work for impact and look for opportunities for wider spread of the interventions tested within our footprint in close collaboration with other networks working in this area.

Why these interventions?

The Significant 7+ framework consists of a toolkit to support care workers to identify the soft signs of deterioration and an interactive training package delivered by healthcare professionals. The tool has been developed by the North East London Foundation Trust's team and supports staff to identify the seven areas of patient deterioration which are: confusion, mood, pain, hydration, skin, breathing, toilet, nutrition and mobility. Each of these areas in the toolkit has a decision tree aimed at helping care workers assess the patient and take earlier action. If a care worker identifies changes in patient's health (mental or physical), the decision trees prompt them to ask further questions about the problem and suggest simple interventions or an escalation route as appropriate. Training is provided by a qualified and experienced nursing team in a fun and interactive session that helps staff learn how they can incorporate the tools into their daily work.

The tool has been tested in the care home setting and it is associated with reduction in episodes of pressure ulcers and falls by 23% and 17% respectively over a 3-month period². The evaluation also showed that all staff trained felt more empowered and confident in their role and ability to recognise signs of resident deterioration³.

The Significant 7+ project won the 2017 Patient Safety in the Community award and was shortlisted for the 2018 RCNi Nurse Awards, in the Nursing Older People Award category. The Significant 7+ tool

is an enabler and a key to better communication within the community setting, building trust and creating better outcomes for patients.

The Whzan Health System for recording NEWS2 incorporates vital signs monitoring equipment with Bluetooth capability for recording and presenting patient data. It is a telehealth system that connects patients with their care provider more effectively in order to monitor their health status and escalate issues more effectively. Care staff assess a patient’s vital signs using the provided portable monitoring kit (blood pressure monitor, thermometer, pulse oximeter) with a series of specifically designed questions on a tablet, which can then be digitally communicated to the clinical triage team or a GP for a review alongside previously set and agreed parameters for the individual patient. If the vital sign readings are outside of pre-defined individual tolerances, the clinical triage team manages the alert through an agreed action response (please see Figure 1 describing the Whzan operating model).

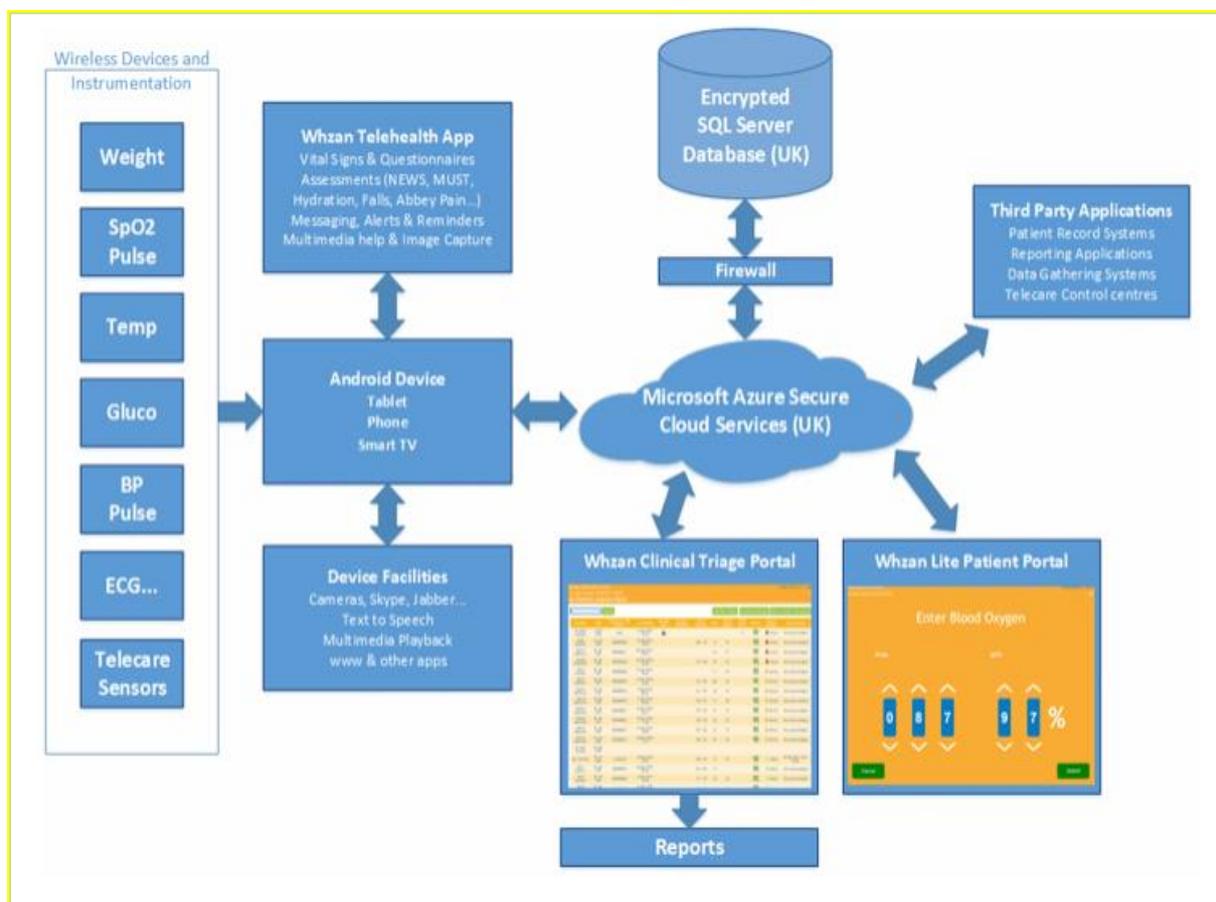


Figure 1 - Whzan operating model

Whzan telehealth system has been tested in residential care, nursing and learning disabilities homes and domiciliary care. It is currently monitoring over 18,000 people in care homes and their own homes, and Whzan competency is regarded as a desirable skill within over 600 care homes.

Improvements associated with its use include improved outcomes for acutely unwell residents, a 49,2% reduction in bed days, increased staff engagement and satisfaction and an overall cost saving of £756,144 in A&E attendances and ambulance services across 8 care homes in one year⁴. Whzan and Sunderland CCG have won the 2016 HSJ award ‘Best value in Telehealth’ for their work on using digital technology to track the health of care home residents. Impact case studies and further references can be made available upon request.

We are now looking to build on existing work and learn further about enablers and barriers to implementing these interventions in community setting. The programme will be delivered by UCLPartners in partnership with Whzan and Significant 7+ providers.

Who can apply?

We are seeking applications from a wide range of organisations that commission and/or provide community health and social care services, such as Community Health Trusts (CHT), Local Authorities (LA) and/or Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), within the UCLPartners footprint, to implement Whzan and Significant 7+ to assess the impact the interventions have on patient safety and quality of care. We also encourage these organisations to apply as a partnership or via their Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) if covering a particular locality.

We expect these Lead organisations to identify one or more care provider teams (test sites) in their locality such as: community nursing teams, reablement teams, residential and nursing care homes, domiciliary care providers and specialised supported accommodation for people with a learning disability, and work with us to ensure a coordinated approach to the programme delivery.

Lead organisations applying to be part of the programme can choose to be considered for testing either or both interventions. Depending on the number of successful applicants, we will agree a total number of the test sites per Lead organisation so that it fits with the available funding envelope.

How will this work?

Significant 7+

We will be supporting the development of a small group of facilitators able to deliver training in their respective care provider organisations (test sites). We expect the Lead organisation to identify test sites and nominate 2-3 care managers/deputy managers/in-house trainers per test site to join the programme. These facilitators will be trained in the use of the Significant 7 and then be expected to teach, mentor or train care workers in their respective organisations.

The Significant 7+ team has developed a specific toolkit for each of the care settings: care homes, domiciliary care and specialised supported accommodation for people with a learning disability.

The aim is to create a cohort of trained facilitators, across a diverse range of sites, providing Significant 7+ training to their colleagues, having trained majority of support care workers in their respective organisations by April 2020.

Participating teams in the 6-month Significant 7+ programme will benefit from:

- Provision of the Significant 7+ 'train the trainer' education package with a 3-month follow up (each training session takes half a day)
- Support with creation of local algorithms / escalation routes and engagement plans with, GPs, ambulance services and rapid response teams / community nursing teams
- Post-training monthly telecoms / webinars to provide an opportunity to collaborate, share learning and discuss any challenges
- Support to engage residents and their families
- Access to the Significant 7+ toolkit
- Guidance on how to use SBAR for effective communication

- Bespoke Quality Improvement coaching and associated measurement to support monitoring of progress
- Being part of the deterioration programme-wide community of practice

Whzan

We are looking to work with a small number of Lead organisations and their respective test sites to use and evaluate the impact of Whzan digital solution. Whzan automatically calculates the NEWS2 and provides traffic light feedback to indicate if clinical intervention is required. It is also designed to empower care workers to support their judgements when escalating.

A Whzan portable monitoring kit contains a tablet with the SIM card, blood pressure monitor, thermometer and pulse oximeter. Respiratory rate is entered on the tablet manually. One kit can monitor up to 25 beds in a care home or can be used by one domiciliary care team (usually 2 case workers). If, for example, the test sites are care homes and/or assisted living accommodation, we envisage them to be of medium size in terms of number of residents (accommodating approximately 25 residents), in order to ensure effective use of the Whzan kit.

Participating teams in the 6-month Whzan programme will benefit from:

- Provision of the Whzan portable monitoring kit and a 6-monthly subscription, with the possibility of extending for a further 6 months based on the team's participation
- Introductory training on how to use the monitoring kit by the Whzan team
- Virtual support and follow up training (up to 30 min) to fit the needs of the test sites
- Post-training monthly telecons / webinars to provide an opportunity to collaborate, share learning and discuss any challenges
- Guidance on how to use SBAR for effective communication
- Bespoke Quality Improvement coaching and associated measurement to support monitoring of progress
- Being part of the deterioration programme-wide community of practice

The commitment

The expectations of the Lead organisations:

- Appoint a member of your team to act as a programme coordinator for your locality with specific duties:
 - To identify test sites and coordinate the delivery of the programme
 - To attend the Whzan and/or Significant 7+ training to be able to provide ongoing support to teams post programme
 - To liaise with UCLPartners and Significant 7+ / Whzan team
 - Promote SBAR and coordinate engagements with GPs, ambulance services and related community teams
 - Support evaluation activities, collect questionnaires and share with UCLPartners team
- Support and explicit commitment of your senior management team ensuring the Lead organisations has sufficient time and resources available to actively participate in the programme

The expectations of the test sites:

- Support and explicit commitment of the test site’s senior management team ensuring the nominated test site staff (e.g. care home manager, training manager, trainer, healthcare assistant etc.) have sufficient time and resources available to actively participate in the programme
- Nominate staff to lead on the test site wide Whzan implementation and/or Significant 7+ training:
 - Incorporate what they learnt into their induction and refresher training programmes
 - Create a training plan, schedule and deliver in-house training to all staff; including the domestic staff, if appropriate.
 - Embed training into regular training/induction programmes to ensure its sustainability
 - Support evaluation activities, collect and provide the commissioning team with monthly updates and improvements.

We would also expect organisations working in collaboration with UCLPartners, Whzan and Significant 7+ to embrace the following principles of participation:

- Behave in a way that supports learning
- Share learning and support others to apply the learning
- Share both successes and challenges of undertaking your work
- Contribute to evaluation and communications activities associated with the programme
- Contribute to existing networks to support development of ideas locally.

Key dates

Please see below for the schedule of key dates. Bespoke improvement coaching will be provided through monthly webinars and site visits, agreed with the test sites at a later stage.

	Date	Action
Monday	05 August 2019	Call for expressions of interest advertised
Tuesday	20 August 2019	Information call for interested teams
Monday	16 September 2019	Submission deadline
Wednesday	18 September 2019	Notification of shortlisting
Thursday	26 September 2019	Interviews
Monday	30 September 2019	Notification of selection
Thursday	17 October 2019	Programme launch event and a training session
Friday	17 January 2020	Follow up training session
Thursday	02 April 2020	Final learning session

Fees

Participation in this programme is free of charge to teams from UCLPartners' partner organisations, though there may be an administration fee applied for missed training. The Significant 7+ training package is valued at £400 per person and supply and support of Whzan is valued at £1000 per kit.

How to apply?

Acceptance on to the programme will be through a two-step process:

1. Complete the expression of interest form and submit to patientsafety@uclpartners.com by **10am on Monday, 16 September 2019**. Please note, we will not be able to accept late or incomplete expressions of interest. The signature of support from a member of the senior management team from the Lead organisation is required before submission.
2. Join the **Information call at 2pm on Tuesday, 20 August 2019** to find out more. Please sign up here to receive dial-in detail: <https://bit.ly/31amhPO>
3. **Interviews** with the shortlisted teams will take place **on Thursday, 26 September 2019**. Please arrange for a representative from the Lead organisation and at least one of the test sites to attend. Further details of what to expect at interview will be provided if you are shortlisted.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity before submitting an expression of interest contact Valentina Karas, Patient Safety Programme Manager at UCLPartners at valentina.karas@uclpartners.com

References

1. Spilsbury K, Barbara H, McCaughan D. *Supporting nursing in care homes. Project report for the RCN Foundation*. York: University of York; 2015. <https://tinyurl.com/n5mlhmw> [accessed 25 July 2019]
2. S Little, G Rodgers (2018) *A QI Project – Significant 7: a training programme for care home staff on preventing deterioration of frail residents*, Age and Ageing, Volume 47, Issue suppl_2, Pages ii25– ii39 <https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afy028.24>
3. S Little, G Rodgers, J Fitzpatrick (2019) *Managing deterioration in older adults in care homes: a quality improvement project to introduce an early warning tool*, British Journal of Community Nursing, Vol. 24, No. 2, <https://doi.org/10.12968/bjcn.2019.24.2.58>
4. The Well Connected Care Homes Project, 2019 [Online]. [Accessed on 21 June 2019]. Available from: <http://atlas.ahsnnetwork.com/well-connected-care-homes/>