Nurse Agile Working Using Tablet Devices in Springburn

Introduction
Tablet devices were first introduced across NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde in 2014. Despite initial staff concerns about moving from paper records to electronic records, within the community, staff within Springburn Health Centre have embraced the change and are now seeing the benefits for themselves, their patients and the District Nursing Service.

The Community Nursing Information System (CNIS) has been in use for over 10 years and staff are well used to electronic records which are completed back at base. With CNIS available on the tablet device, staff now undertake record keeping with the patient in their own home. This releases patient facing time and allows staff the independence and freedom to plan their working day around the specific needs and requirements of their patients without being restricted to service specific drivers such as accessing desktop pcs, starting and finishing work at their base to allocate patients and workload etc.

Aim/s
Tablet devices were introduced to improve efficiency and effectiveness within Community Nursing Services by:

- Releasing time spent at desktop computers to increase patient facing time

Various systems are available on the tablet device so practitioners can look up key information regarding patients including Clinical Portal: this reduces room for error

- Using a tablet device facilitates agile working thereby centring nursing resources around patient care

Method & Process
An NHS GG&C programme was designed to support the development and implementation of tablet devices. A project managed, phased approach was introduced and training (including change management) was delivered to all staff members. Key contacts were identified so staff could quickly access support if any issues arose. This approach worked extremely well and staff reported positive feedback.

Work is underway to define a local list of ‘hints an tips’ as all staff become more familiar with the technology and process of implementing it.

The Functional Group meets regularly with staff representatives from every area. Any recommendations for improvement or change are escalated to the CNIS Governance Group for approval. As more staff become increasingly familiar with the device, its usefulness in practice increases. In Springburn staff have elected to give up white cards and move to electronic white cards and scheduling. Whilst this caused some issues arose. This approach worked extremely well and staff reported positive feedback. Work is underway to define a local list of ‘hints an tips’ as all staff become more familiar with the technology and process of implementing it.

Clinical Guidelines, policies etc can be stored on the tablet device so practitioners can look up key information about patients.

- An offline app is in development: should staff experience any connectivity issues, data can be recorded on the tablet device and uploaded onto the Community Nursing Information System as soon as connection is re-established. Testing is currently underway and initial feedback is favourable.

Ensuring regular opportunities to meet with colleagues is essential therefore staff have developed processes which suit their new working pattern and ensures a balance of patient facing time and peer support and information sharing.

Results
The introduction of Tablet Devices and Agile Working has been amongst the biggest changes facing Community Nursing Staff over the last few years. Despite initial concerns, staff in Springburn have ‘grasped the nettle’ and gradually introduced the changes required to allow them to operate agilely and electronically. As familiarity with the device, the systems and the processes increases, so too does confidence and competence. Communication is improved because staff have immediate access to live information about patients.

Peer support and positive feedback from patients and their carers continues to motivate staff to make this work as effectively and efficiently as possible. The following feedback represents staff satisfaction with the progress being made:

- “It has revolutionised District Nursing – we are able to complete full nursing assessments and order equipment in patients’ houses”

- “It provides easier access to patient information, saves time as you can access patients’ results without the need to spend time phoning around”

- “Its great having the ability to write up patients’ records straight after visits. Everything is to hand”

- “It was really useful recently as we could plan visits around the weather”

Conclusion
More lessons need to be learned and evidenced about the benefits that can be realised from using tablet devices and working agilely. Staff commitment to this programme of change has meant that evaluation of the impact of this way of working can begin to be evaluated robustly.

Already, anecdotal evidence suggests benefits for practitioners, patients and the Service however more detailed analysis of the impact of this programme of change will help determine the next steps.

For Further Information
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