

REGIONAL TELECARE COLLABORATION NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 2008

Update

Since the Autumn of 2007, the North Wales Social Services Improvements Agency have been working on the next phase (Phase 2) in the development of Telecare services throughout North Wales by exploring areas for further collaboration. This work is building upon the recommendations made by external consultants during phase 1 of the Telecare collaboration project by progressing three principal strands of activity:

- the costs of current operations across the region's four call monitoring centres
- choosing the most effective ways of organising Telecare call monitoring services
- engaging policy and operations staff from all six LA's across a range of service management issues common to all.

This newsletter brings you an update of the progress and issues being worked on so far. In October 2007, Jonathan Walsh was appointed as the regional Telecare Project Manager for Phase 2 of this initiative and is working with an established local authority task group comprising policy and operations officers from all six counties.

News from the Project Management Board

The inaugural meeting of the Regional Telecare Collaboration project – Phase 2 Project Management Board (PMB) was held in December 2007 to discuss and approve the way forward. Under the chair-ship of project sponsor Byron Williams, the meeting brought together representative officers from the LAs, SSIA and WAG to establish the direction of the project. The Project Initiation Document (PID) was discussed at length which outlines a programme of work comprising three components that can be progressed simultaneously. Of particular interest to the meeting were issues concerning the inter-operation between current call monitoring services and other OOH services, and the migration of current services towards a chosen Telecare call monitoring collaborative model. The next meeting is scheduled for the end of February.

Cost of current Call Monitoring Centres – Component 1

The first component to the current Phase 2 project is to re-visit the costs of running the current call monitoring service across the six North Wales counties, using the four call monitoring centres. The rationale behind this component emanates from observations made by regional Finance Officers on the Phase 1 consultants findings; " there is nothing in the report to determine the present running costs of Telecare Services in the 6 authorities. It is therefore not possible to compare costs between authorities nor is it possible to compare the cost of the proposals against the present costs." Clearly, the current Phase 2 of the project has to attempt to satisfy this position in order to justify any future collaboration in Telecare call monitoring on the grounds of cost savings. To date, Jonathan Walsh, has been working with senior finance staff in Isle of Anglesey County Council and regional officers to develop a uniform financial template to gather

financial data on Telecare call monitoring operations so that future benchmarking activities have relevance. This work is complex due to the inter-relationship between Telecare monitoring services and other Out-of-Hours operations in each of the four centres. However, progress is being made with Anglesey's Gofal Môn service being used as trial centre to prototype and develop a template that can be used across the region.

Future Telecare Monitoring Centre Collaboration – Component 2

The main recommendation from the external consultants report in Phase 1 was the establishment of one regional Telecare monitoring centre serving all six counties. This component of the current Phase 2 project aims to re-visit seven different Telecare monitoring centre models for the region taking into consideration compatibility with the principles of regional collaboration, likely cost impacts, disaggregation of other Out-of-Hours services and migration issues. The list of seven initial options was set by the Phase 2 LA task group and includes;

- Option 1 One regional North Wales Telecare monitoring service from a single centre.
- Option 2 Two call centres, covering the West and East of the region.
- Option 3 Maintaining the status quo, four call monitoring centres.
- Option 4 An outsourced monitoring service located either within or outside the North Wales region.
- Option 5 A single monitoring service, dispersed throughout the region with consideration of a "virtual" web based technology solution.
- Option 6 Three call centres, each covering 2 counties; Anglesey-Gwynedd, Conwy-Denbighshire, Flintshire-Wrexham.
- Option 7 Six call centres, one for each county in North Wales.

Each of the above are currently being investigated in a SWOT style analysis which will be reported to the PMB to decide which option(s) will be subjected to a more detailed review and taken forward.

Telecare Service Management and Operations – Component 3

This component of the Phase 2 project offers each of the six North Wales counties an opportunity to collaborate in areas of Telecare service and operations management for mutual benefit. Driven by the Phase 2 Telecare LA Task Group, this component is exploring collaborative working across issues such as; training, charging, response strategies, procurement & equipment, installation & maintenance, assessment, prescription & mainstream planning (management structures). The Phase 2 Telecare LA Task Group meets monthly and will concentrate on one of these issues at each meeting. A template outlining the current status of each LA against each of the issues is currently being generated and shared so that each county can evaluate where they stand in relation to progress throughout the region, where each can contribute most and where each can gain most through mutual collaboration, regardless of which Telecare monitoring centre structure the region eventually adopts.

Engagement with the All Wales Telecare Learning Information Network (LIN)

The all Wales Telecare LIN, organised by WAG Telecare Policy Advisor Lee Davis, meets periodically and includes representatives from all Welsh LAs. The North Wales Phase 2 Telecare Collaboration project had been presented to LIN members and has generated considerable interest, with messages of “Good Luck” gratefully received from LAs outside the region! Through engaging with the LIN, the Phase 2 project is benefiting from information sharing especially concerning the forthcoming migration of telecommunications to BT 21CN and charging policies employed by different Welsh LAs. Of course, the LIN provides a number of opportunities to engage LAs outside the North Wales region on various subjects and this Phase 2 project is doing so while investigating the benefits, or otherwise, of different Telecare monitoring centre models currently in operation (component 2).

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