

Backgrounder

Overview

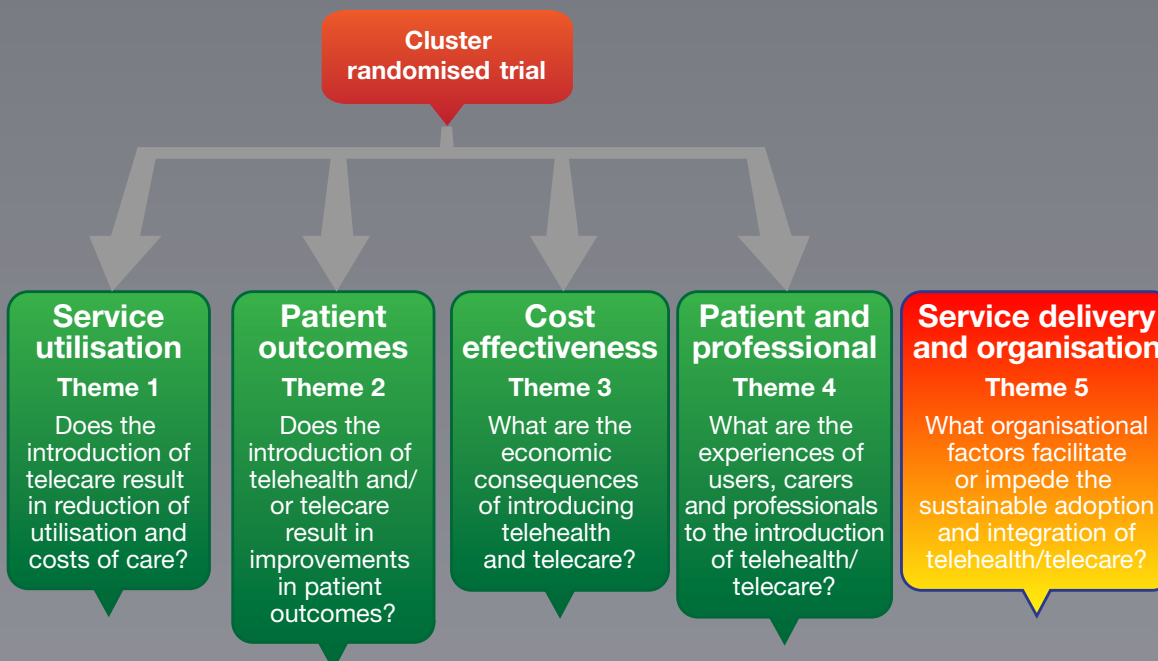
The Whole Systems Demonstrator (WSD) programme was established by the Department of Health to evaluate how the use of telecare and telehealth can support people with long-term health and care needs to live independently. DH invested £31m in the two year research project which aimed to create the largest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

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, covering 6,000 patients in the largest randomised control study of its kind in the world. Tunstall’s products and services were at the heart of the trial, and the results have further strengthened the expertise and resources the company can offer to support its customers in redesigning their services to embed telehealthcare at scale and deliver better for less.

Evaluation

A consortium of universities (led by University College London) undertook an evaluation of the programme assessing its clinical and cost effectiveness, working to five themes:



Highlights of the report

The WSD programme has shown a:

- 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

Results

The WSD programme is providing many benefits:

- Evidence to overcome barriers to wide scale adoption of telecare and telehealth
- An opportunity to build considerable expertise across central government and the health, social care, academic and supply sectors
- Improved understanding of who is most likely to benefit from telecare and telehealth services
- Support to optimise the design of large scale services
- 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

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