

Case Study

How Somerset
Council is
Empowering Their
Workforce to
Prescribe TEC with
TSA's Virtual Home



Somerset
Council



Introduction

While Technology Enabled Care (TEC) may admittedly not have been the first consideration for Somerset Council staff, they recognised that it could be the most suitable solution for some of the individuals seeking their support. Julian Bellew, Senior Commissioning Officer at Somerset Council, aimed to develop a service that would enable their staff to effectively prescribe TEC.

The council initially conducted several pilot projects. One such initiative involved investing in TEC equipment and distributing it to individuals who could benefit. However, they soon realised the need for a more tailored approach—starting by identifying individual needs and then finding the best solution for each person.

Challenges

The council's priority was to enhance their workforce's knowledge and awareness of TEC products, as well as their understanding of how these technologies can promote independence. It was also crucial to build the staff's confidence, so they felt comfortable prescribing TEC solutions.

Somerset Council recognised that this training needed to be accessible to all adult social care staff and have the potential for future expansion to external partners, such as the NHS and voluntary community groups. With limited internal resources, they sought to outsource the training programme.

Below: Images from inside TSA's Virtual Home



Approach

The council required a pre-packaged, online training solution, especially with the shift to hybrid working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They learned about TSA's Virtual Home training from another council, which appeared to be the ideal fit.

TSA's Virtual Home provides real-world simulation training, allowing staff to step into a lifelike digital environment where they can hone their skills and make a real impact. The programme features e-learning modules with scenario-based learning, offering two levels of training.

The first level, TEC Explorer, introduces Technology Enabled Care, demystifying jargon and showing how technology can enhance safety and independence at home. The second level, TEC Expert, offers a deeper dive into using technology to boost independence and wellbeing.

This tool simplifies TEC assessments, while promoting a user-centred, inclusive, and legally compliant approach, ultimately improving care outcomes and user satisfaction.

Since embedding Virtual Home into their operations, Somerset Council has incentivised staff by awarding a Prescriber licence to those who complete the training, allowing them to order TEC products. Additional strategies include a twice-weekly "Tech Chat" drop-in session for staff to discuss TEC and the appointment of TEC influencers to keep the conversation active and ensure consistent engagement.

Outcomes

The feedback from staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

Claire Collett, Advanced Practitioner Occupational Therapist and Technology Enabled Care Lead, remarked: "I've had nearly 20 years of experience, and I still thought it was a great course. When I put myself in the shoes of someone unfamiliar with TEC, it's clear that this is an excellent tool."

Moira Harley, Project and Change Officer at Somerset Council, added: "The benefit of this training is that more people are prescribing technology, which can help delay individuals needing to go into hospital or care. If you can prevent someone from requiring extra care for six months, that takes pressure off the system. That's the vision."



Conclusion

Somerset Council continues to champion TSA's Virtual Home, and we are closely working with them to monitor the long-term impact on their workforce and beyond.

Over 4,500 professionals and more than 20 organisations across the UK are already harnessing the power of the Virtual Home. **Ready to elevate your TEC training? Contact us today to explore how the Virtual Home can transform your workforce.** Email us at workforce@tsa-voice.org.uk or call 01625 520 320.

Get in touch

For further information and support around your workforce, contact us at [**workforce@tsa-voice.org.uk**](mailto:workforce@tsa-voice.org.uk)

