



TSA Member case study

Pivotell and Norfolk Medicines Support Service

Overview

Medication non-adherence is a significant cost to the NHS. It has been estimated that 50% of patients do not take their medicines as prescribed. Many of these patients will require additional treatment as a direct result. Research in 2010 by the York Health Economics Consortium and School of Pharmacy (University of London) suggests that non-adherence may cost the NHS £500m a year. Inflating this to 2015/2016 prices implies a cost today of £568m per annum across the UK.

Norfolk County Council Assistive Technology team first starting using [Pivotell](#) Automatic Pill Dispensers to improve adherence in non-compliant patients in 2006.

Solution

Shortly afterwards, Norfolk Medicines Support started the specialist assessment for the service, as it was recognised that pharmaceutical input was required.

Over time, Norfolk have had more than 500 patients using a dispenser, and currently have just over 200 patients with them.

The main reasons for opting for a pill dispenser are:

- Dementia and worsening confusion around medication
- Mental health illness
- Learning disability

The large majority of dispensers in Norfolk are filled by the person's community pharmacy or dispensing surgery with a handful filled by the person's relative after training from Norfolk Medicines Support Service.

Outcome

Mr A from Norwich was originally assessed for the use of a Pivotell in November 2014. He was starting to exhibit signs of dementia. After assessment it was decided that Mr A may respond well to using a Pivotell to support his medication compliance.

Once he started to take his medication correctly, Mr A improved considerably and the care package was no longer required.

Calculations showed a potential saving of £5,900* for Social Care with the reduction of Mr A's care package, plus the uncalculated savings to Health Care from better adherence to medication. As one of the medications is for dementia, the improved compliance has likely increased his ability to continue to live independently.

Based on current level of patients using pill dispensers, Helen Wilson estimates that Norfolk save over £600,000 annually on social care costs alone (assuming that on average 2 x 15minute care calls are saved) – which would usually be the only option should the PivoteLL not be in place.

Helen Wilson, Medicines Support Service Manager, Norfolk County Council Assistive Technology team says, “Automatic Pill Dispensers are not always the solution, and we do sometimes have people who have inappropriate expectations from pill dispensers, but that being said we often try them to avoid a long-term package of care, particularly since the changes to Care Act eligibility.”

Norfolk has been particularly successful with encouraging Pharmacy Filling of dispensers where there is no family member available. Norfolk Adult Community Services have over 120 suppliers (pharmacies and dispensing surgeries) who have agreed to fill their pill trays. PivoteLL supply filler trays free of charge to pharmacists.

* The cost savings calculated are: £4.15 (cost of care for 15 minute call) x 2 (calls daily) x 30.4 (days in month) x 18 months = £4,543 vs unit costs of carousel + £234 paid to pharmacy for filling fees.

About TSA

TSA is the industry body for technology enabled care (TEC) services, representing organisations including telecare and telehealth service providers and suppliers, commissioners, digital health businesses, housing associations, emergency services, academics, charities and government bodies.

For further information about TSA services, our membership, quality standards, training and consultancy please contact us:

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