

Innovative Health and Social Care Technology Award

This award will recognise the development of an innovative health care technology that improves the delivery of services for patients, service users or carers.

Endorsed by



Specialist Intermediate Care Services Herefordshire Council

Within the first three months of a pilot using pioneering 'Smart' phone technology, a team at Herefordshire Health and Social Care Services cut admissions to residential care homes by 43 percent.

The assistive technology adopted by the Intermediate Care Services team monitors the activity of service users and alerts a care specialist via phone if they are at risk or stray outside of their normal daily routine.

The technology is a key component in a larger improvement programme designed to promote the independence of people with mental health needs – particularly those with dementia – to support them to live in their own home and reduce instances of costly emergency hospital or care home admissions.

Another aim is to work more closely with family carers and provide them with better support. The technology cleverly provides information about their loved-one's daily routines and patterns of activity which can be accessed online. The team says that this has greatly improved the relationship between family carers and professionals because both parties have access to objective information when conducting risk assessments. It has also given service users a genuine voice in the decision-making process because it provides concrete evidence of their strengths and capabilities.

The importance of the technology pilot and wider programme cannot be underestimated. As the number of older people living alone increases and adults living with elderly parents declines, technology is likely to play a growing role in care provision. Herefordshire Council estimate that in two years there will be 700 more people with dementia requiring continuous support.

Judges' comment: ***An excellent example of how monitoring technology can identify targeted groups for intervention; the team pulled this together with very little resources.***