

Hydration at Home Toolkit Pilot

Project Summary (23/12/21)

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Background

In 2020 A project team consisting of members from WPSC, HIOW ICS and 5 provider organisations (Caring Hands Domiciliary Services, Crown Home Care, Home Instead [Basingstoke], Ranger Home Care and Verina Daly Care) including members of the Hampshire Care Association, was established to review and pilot the implementation of the Wessex Hydration Toolkit (published by Wessex AHSN in 2020, with input from a number of sources including domiciliary care providers).

Whilst this project summary provides much of the key information a copy of the full report can be obtained from Wessex Patient Safety Collaborative on request.

Defining the Problem

Dehydration is a cause of deterioration in older people due to the potential adverse effects on function and clinical outcome. Common complications include constipation, pressure ulcers, urinary tract infections, and dizziness leading to falls and fractures. The majority of cases of dehydration in older people is known to be caused by prolonged inadequate oral fluid intake.

Resources such as Wessex AHSNs “Hydration at Home Toolkit” can help prevent dehydration related deterioration when used appropriately.

Project Aim

To improve staff confidence, and thereby client outcomes, relating to the management of hydration by community carers of any role or level (including care homes, domiciliary Care Workers, unpaid carers and volunteers) by increasing use of the Wessex AHSN Hydration at Home Toolkit.

Methodology

The pilot ran for 8 weeks, from 23/4/21 to 18/6/21 and delivered a number of outputs including:

1. Identification of available information to help raise awareness about hydration management amongst Care Workers and clients.
2. Production of a PowerPoint slide deck and hardcopy version of the Wessex Hydration e-Toolkit as a training resource for care providers
3. Recommendation for a short list of key Hydration resources from the list of over 40 resources.
4. Clarification of means of accessing the Wessex Hydration e-Toolkit as self-directed learning via of the Health Education England’s e-LfH learning platform by Carer workers and other individuals not in possession of an NHS email account.
5. Uptake of the Wessex Hydration Toolkit via e-LfH, PowerPoint and Hardcopy by all providers involved in pilot.
6. Identification and sharing of (currently) 167 training modules on HEE e-LfH platform available to Care Workers and others without an NHS email account.

7. Engagement with-Learning Platform providers used by Hampshire care providers to discuss adding Wessex Hydration e-Toolkit to their portfolio.

PIER framework (Prevention; Identification; Escalation; Response)

The Hydration at Home project was designed to develop a [P]reventative element to the management of deterioration.

DRAFT

Some reflections from the Project Team leads:

Caring Hands Domiciliary Services [CHD]

Director: We loved the flexibility of the different options (e-learning, PowerPoint, handout) for delivering the hydration training and that whichever option was chosen the content is exactly the same.

Because of time constraints with a heatwave imminent and still facilitating mostly e-learning due to Covid, we have been rolling out the hydration module through Health Education England's e-Learning for Health platform.

Going forward, we will most likely provide face-to-face training in small groups using the PowerPoint and handouts this project team has produced.

The short list of relevant resources is fantastic, as it means my trainer does not have to trawl through lots of resources, which are often more relevant for care homes. I loved 'Grandad's Story', a short video of a homecare specific case study.

The training programme kept the attention of the Care Workers, with many commenting on liking the interactive quizzes.

The resources for sharing with clients and their families are fantastic – brightly coloured, great pictures and simple text.

The icing on the cake for this project will be if our e-learning provider, along with others, is able to add this training module to their portfolio, as our staff are familiar with accessing training through our provider, as well as automatically recording in our training matrix.

Crown Home Care [CHC]

Carer: Thought she had the knowledge around hydration but learnt other ways to introduce fluids to her clients she was not familiar with

Relatives: Were impressed to be involved and working in a partnership with others. They also learnt other ways of increasing fluid intake and it gave us kudos with relatives, increasing their confidence in us.

Supervisor: Because the carers have been involved in a new project they were very focused at succeeding and felt motivated when reporting their successful results. Carers enjoyed being part of something they described as different

Manager: We have always had hydration tasks but the approach for the project has been focused which has motivated the team. We have spoken to clients and they have an expectation that this is part of the role of the carer quite rightly.

Home Instead Basingstoke [HIB]

Deputy Mgr: Care Givers found the information very beneficial and empowering.

The Hydration posters are useful to open a dialog with their clients and their families about hydration and the posters provided a good visual for their clients who have dementia to help as a reminder to have a drink.

Care Givers also found the information on the high-water content of foods very useful as another way to introduce extra fluids.

Verina Daly Care [VDC]

Director: “It has been an absolute pleasure working with this team, empowering as to the education and quality of care we as a company want to deliver across the board and the fact that you can be involved and have an effect on the outcome.

Our staff, clients and relatives all thought they knew all kinds of tips and felt they were drinking plenty, however, once this was discussed and new cups/care plan routines/awareness were introduced, thank you to this project, we all realised there was so much more that could be done when somebody does not like drinking much”



Client and Public Involvement

The initial project focussed on training Care Workers in hydration management using the WAHSN Hydration at Home toolkit. Learning from the pilot was used to extend the scope including engaging with, and raising awareness amongst, other care groups, clients and families.

Identified Potential Benefits

- Improved knowledge amongst Care Workers (and relatives)
- Greater job satisfaction amongst Care Workers
- Improved communication / care planning between clients, Care Workers and families
- Improved Outcomes for Clients e.g. better hydration, reduced poor outcomes / referrals

Project Outputs

Hydration management information for Care Workers and clients

The Wessex AHSN Hydration Toolkit consists of an e-learning module and accompanying resources. It was developed for community Care Workers of any role or level (including care homes, domiciliary care workers, unpaid carers and volunteers). The e-learning module provides a basic overview of the hydration needs specifically for older people and how Care Workers can support people to drink more.

The Toolkit also aims to dispel common myths, such as why using urine colour or skin turgor (pinch test) are NOT suitable for older people.

The e-Learning module on Health Education England's (HEE) e-Learning for Health (e-LfH) portal can be accessed via computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone, takes approximately 40 minutes to complete and consists of four sections:

- 1) Defining good and poor hydration and explaining their impact
- 2) Assessing a person's hydration needs to minimise the risk of poor hydration
- 3) Addressing a person's hydration needs to improve their health and wellbeing
- 4) An assessment for testing knowledge and obtaining a certificate

The Toolkit also includes a number of additional resources including:

- Grandad's Story (video) - a video highlight how to recognise dehydration and provide support. Grandad's Story is also available with subtitles, which is ideal for showing in GP practice waiting rooms or for people who with a hearing impairment
- Links to recommended resources - these are linked to each section of the e-Learning module and can be viewed by downloading the PDFs from the 'resources' section on the right
- Public health resources:

- a hydration leaflet entitled 'Staying hydrated as we get older: advice and guidance for people over 65, their family, friends and carers'. (Available as a trifold leaflet and as a large-print A4 version.)
- A 'top tips' poster.

See Appendix A for links to these resources.

Hydration resources for Care Workers (Self-directed learning via HEE e-LfH)

The Wessex AHSN Hydration Toolkit is hosted on HEEs e-LfH portal. (It is also accessible by Hampshire County Councils own staff via their internal learning portal.)

The HEE e-LfH portal can be used by anyone with an interest in accessing the healthcare relevant content. NHS staff can access the portal by registering on the website using their NHS email address whilst Care Workers, and other individuals without an NHS email account, can access the portal by registering as a carer or volunteer.

Other training programmes on the HEE e-LfH platform are available to Care Workers and others without an NHS email account (see section below on “Other Resources for Care Workers” and Appendix B for a full listing of available HEE e-LfH modules).

See Appendix A for links to the HEE e-LfH platform.

Recommendation for a short list of key Hydration resources from the list of over 40 resources.

The WAHSN Toolkit listed over 40 available hydration resources. However the project team felt that was too many, not all were easily accessible and it was difficult to identify the most appropriate resources.

The team also wanted to identify a single resource that could be left with clients and families, either routinely or at times of specific concern around hydration.

The project team reviewed all of the listed resources in the 4 sections of the e-Learning module and shortlisted four key resources which were of most use including one that could be left with clients and families where appropriate ('Staying hydrated as we get older' leaflet).

- **'Staying hydrated as we get older: advice and guidance for people over 65, their family, friends and carers'** (Trifold or A4 Large Print Leaflet)
- **Improving your Hydration - Top Tips for older people** (A4 & A3 Poster)
- **Good Hydration! Keeping care home residents happy and healthy** (YouTube Video from Oxford AHSN at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hZR8DX_Tao)
- **Making Drinking Fun Toolkit – Visual illustration of how many cups / mugs of fluid are needed each day** (Two A4 Posters from Drinkit Toolkit)

See Appendix A for links to these resources.

Hydration resources for trainers (PowerPoint and hardcopy)

HEEs e-LfL portal is designed to enable individuals to carry out self-directed learning at their own pace and also to manage their own learning portfolio.

However one of the project aims was to develop hydration resources for Provider organisations to deliver to their staff via training leads. To achieve this a PowerPoint slide deck was produced to mirror the four sections of the e-toolkit creating a resource for training leads to use.

This PowerPoint slide-deck can be accessed via the WPSC website (see Appendix A for link) and can be delivered by training leads using a computer either virtually (via Zoom/Teams) or via a face-to-face training session. The slide deck can also be printed out and used in accordance with local limitations and trainers' preferences.

The consistent use of the same materials throughout all resources means that provider organisations can have confidence that the same training is being made available regardless of the method of delivery and can even mix and match sessions without causing confusion.

Provider uptake of the Wessex Hydration Toolkit

Following initial training and assessment all the provider organisations involved in the pilot made the decision to use the Wessex Hydration Toolkit (via e-LfH, PowerPoint and Hardcopy) in their organisations to raise awareness, and understanding, of the importance of good hydration amongst Care Workers and clients.

Other HEE e-LfH resources for Carers

This project has identified that Care Workers, and other individuals without an NHS email account, can access the HEE e-LfH portal.

At the time of writing there were 166 other training programmes on the HEE e-LfH platform, alongside the hydration module, that are available to Care Workers and others without an NHS email account (a full listing of currently available modules is included in the full report).

Engagement with other Learning Platforms

The project findings informed discussions with other e-Learning Platform providers used by Hampshire care providers around adding the Wessex Hydration e-Toolkit to their portfolio.

Evaluation

System pressures resulting from the Covid pandemic, including increased caseloads, staff shortages due to isolation requirements, training backlogs and consideration of staff well being meant that data collection was not an option and thereby limited the options for project evaluation.

Since the aim of the project was to raise awareness of already available resources the evaluation focussed instead on the identification, delivery and uptake of the project outputs.

Provider organisations were universally in favour of the Hydration at Home Toolkit with all providers choosing to use the toolkit across their organisations.

The development of training resources to enable alternative methods of delivery (i.e. PowerPoint and hardcopy) was appreciated and gave the providers more flexibility around Care Worker training.

The team were able to shortlist four key hydration resources including one, a leaflet, that could be left with clients and families where appropriate.

Another valuable output arising from the project was the identification that Care Workers and other individuals without an NHS email account could register with HEEs e-LfH platform and thereby access not just the Hydration e-toolkit but also (currently) another 166 high quality and relevant training modules.

Recommendations

Following a review of the outputs the project team agreed the following recommendations:

- The use of the WAHSN Hydration Toolkit should be promoted across Hampshire (HIOW ICS & HCA) and Wessex (WPSC)
- Care providers should be encouraged to provide hydration training for Care Workers using the WAHSN Hydration Toolkit (or other resources if preferred) using the variety of resources available (e-Lfh, PowerPoint, hardcopy).
- Domiciliary care providers should be aware of the shortlist of key hydration resources
- Domiciliary care providers should consider using the 'Staying hydrated as we get older' leaflet for leaving with clients and families when appropriate
- Domiciliary care providers should consider making use of the HEE e-LfH portal as part of their overall training provision
- WAHSN should engage with other e-learning providers to consider making the WAHSN toolkit accessible via other e-learning platforms

Glossary

24-hour care	24 hour care means care around the clock, when needed, 24 hours a day. 24-hour care requires a team of Care Workers to be able to provide care when needed around the clock. In some cases this is possible with two live in Care Workers provided the care needs are not too high.
Domiciliary care	The range of services put in place to support an individual in their own home. This type of care is known as homecare or domiciliary care or sometimes home help.
Extra care	A greater range of support than sheltered housing still allowing clients to live independently.
Homecare	see Domiciliary care
Live-in Care	Care provided to individuals by live in Care Workers in their own home, enabling them to retain independence. (see also 24-hour care)
PDSA	The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle is shorthand for testing a change — by planning it, trying it, observing the results, and acting on what is learned. This is the scientific method, used for action-oriented learning. (IHI 2020)
Sheltered housing	Grouped housing, such as a block of flats, usually owned by a local authority or housing association, with a scheme manager, where tenants are usually able to look after themselves and have a degree of independence.

Appendix A – Resources

Hydration at home website <https://wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/354/hydration-at-home-toolkit>

1. Summary of the e-toolkit
<https://wessexahsn.org.uk/img/projects/Hydration%20at%20Home%20Toolkit%20Guide-1600350684.pdf>
2. Link to posters/leaflets <https://wessexahsn.org.uk/img/projects/HydrationPoster-1584451732.pdf> <https://wessexahsn.org.uk/img/projects/HydrationLeaflet-1584374388.pdf>
(large print is also available)
3. Grandads story <https://wessexahsn.org.uk/videos/show/362> (also available with subtitles)
4. Link to the Hydration at Home e-learning via the HEE website <https://www.e-lfh.org.uk/programmes/hydration-in-older-people/>
5. Wessex PSC website <https://wessexahsn.org.uk/projects/358/care-home-training-resources>
with links to:
 - All documents and PowerPoint resources used in this project
 - Wessex AHSNs Healthy Ageing "Improving Hydration in Care Homes",
 - Wessex AHSNs Hydration at Home Toolkit
 - Health Education England's electronic learning for health (e-LfH) portal