

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission Report

Care Technology Update

Date: 03/03/2022

Lead Member: Cllr. Sarah Russell

Lead Director: Martin Samuels

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: ALL
- Report author: Adam Lacey
- Author contact details: 0116 4542282; Adam.Lacey@Leicester.gov.uk
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1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an overview of the Social Care & Education Department's Care Technology Strategy 2020 to 2024 as detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The strategy focusses on the use of Care Technology to promote independence as a means of reducing the need for statutory funded support and is the umbrella term that generally encapsulates a range of supportive technologies, such as assistive technology, telecare, telehealth, and emerging technologies like the use of robotics, virtual reality, and software & applications.
- 1.3 However, the strategy goes beyond the use of Care Technology and seeks to understand and develop the use of Technology Enabled Care (TEC), which is the proactive application of care technology to help people achieve their desired outcomes. TEC approaches to technology are person-centric and technology agnostic – this means that technology should address an existing problem or further an opportunity to support people, recognising that not 'one size fits all'.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission is recommended to note the content of the report and the appendices and to provide feedback / comment.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

3.1 Completed stakeholder engagement

3.1.1 Engagement with several stakeholders has been completed:

- ASC Heads of Service – to understand how TEC aligns to ASC service areas
- ASC Care Management – to develop the department's TEC priorities
- People who currently use ASC Care Technology – a small sample

3.2 Scheduled stakeholder engagement

3.2.1 As part of the upcoming work on TEC, further engagement with stakeholder groups is planned with:

- People who draw on social care support – to understand how Collaborative Robots, or Co-bots have impacted them (Autumn 2022), and to help design new technology solutions. (Summer 2022)

- ASC Care Management and Commissioning colleagues– to identify and prioritise areas to pilot and purchase new technology. (Jan – Mar 2022)

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

Background

- 4.1 SC&E has a Care Technology team which works with local Health to deliver technology that supports adults. The services provided enable people to be safe and independent, however, the technology and approach to introducing more options could be improved.
- 4.2 SC&E has implemented a Care Technology Strategy 2020 to 2024, with a vision to ‘think TEC first’ – this means exploring how technology can best support people to achieve their outcomes before considering other services. There are several key priorities identified to help achieve this vision – **(please see appendix 1 for the full strategy)**.
- 4.3 To help achieve the priorities outlined in the strategy, the department has identified the key areas we need to develop. The work will focus on how we can improve on the existing TEC services delivered to adults, as there is more evidence in the market on how Local Authorities have used technology to deliver successful outcomes for adults. Opportunities to include children and young people will be explored in the future.

5. Detailed report

5.1 ASC’s Current offer

- 5.1.1 Adult Social Care provides a Care Technology service, with ‘standalone’ and Telecare options - **(for some examples of our technology offering, please see appendix 2)**.
- 5.1.2 Standalone technology is either used directly by a person who can undertake a task without supervision or is reliant upon someone living in the property with the person, who can help if required. Typical types of standalone technology are medication dispensers, electronic clocks with medication reminders, dementia clocks and sensor technology which connects to a pager.
- 5.1.3 Telecare technology is used more typically by a person who lives alone or may be alone for long periods of time. The Care Technology service installs and monitors technology to support people’s independence whilst providing 24/7 emergency telephone support for those that need it.
- 5.1.4 Telecare is a chargeable service provided by LeicesterCare, to people on request. Devices are connected via telephone line and can raise calls to LeicesterCare’s 24/7 alarm receiving centre for support.

- 5.1.5 The service can be requested by Health and Social Care professionals. Care Technology specialists work with people and professionals to identify the right technology solution needed to support a person.
- 5.1.6 The Care Technology and LeicesterCare service supports up to 5,500 people at any time, with approximately 2,000 technology devices installed each year. The service itself is recognised for its work with Health on responding to crisis situations, with the use of technology. There is a catalogue of solutions available to Social Work Professionals, to support people with frailty, poor mobility and physical impairment.
- 5.1.7 As well as supporting people with their independence, the service has been important in the safeguarding of lone workers. When lone working staff do not check-in, or they need to request for help, the LeicesterCare service can be contacted to take appropriate action. The team also support Adult Mental Health Practitioners by handling time-sensitive calls when professionals are busy visiting people.
- 5.1.8 The service has been able to facilitate timely hospital discharges and avoid admissions and readmissions to hospital and residential care. However, there are opportunities to improve the service and its offer. We could:
- Improve our collective knowledge and confidence in it, so that we can support more people. This means changing our culture about technology.
 - Increase the technology offer itself, with solutions available for more people with differing abilities and outcomes.
 - Be better when identifying how technology benefits people, providers of care, Health partners, and the council.
- 5.1.9 The All Age Care Technology Strategy, and the important work planned will help improve our TEC service and offer.

5.2 Strategy and Key Priorities

- 5.2.1 Adult Social Care faces budgetary constraints that require us to think creatively when supporting people. Technology services that can be preventative, person-focused, and cost-effective can help support people in achieving their outcomes.
- 5.2.2 Working with social work teams, an All Age Care Technology Strategy has been written to identify the work required to improve SC&E's use of technology to support people.
- 5.2.3 The strategy highlights the gaps in the department's current approach to technology, with limited knowledge and confidence in TEC, and the technology itself observed as areas for significant improvement.
- 5.2.4 The vision of the strategy is for us to 'think TEC first'. Three key aims will help us achieve our vision:
- To strengthen our knowledge – this means improving the working knowledge that staff have in TEC, with an aim to increase confidence in TEC use.

- To improve access – this means providing more opportunities for people to use existing, and new technologies to support them.
- To demonstrate the benefits – this means developing feedback from professionals and people to understand how TEC services are supporting them. This will help the department manage what we spend on services, by increasing the use of alternative provision like technology.

5.2.5 Fourteen priorities have been identified and are aligned to the key aims. **(Appendix 1 outlines these priorities and how they link-back to the key aims).**

5.2.6 These priorities focus on delivering improvements to the existing TEC service and our culture, whilst exploring options to be more innovative with technology. The strategy and priorities are the department’s roadmap for improvement in TEC services provided.

5.3 Important work planned

5.3.1 To help deliver the strategy’s vision and priorities, three important pieces of work are underway:

- Pilot Collaborative robots (or Co-bots) - test new technology to support the delivery of reablement and domiciliary care. This will help us improve our TEC offer and demonstrate the benefits for technology.
- Research and forward plan - understand what other new technology could be piloted and purchased to support people. This will help us improve our TEC offer.
- Action and Change – make changes to service delivery and culture, to increase confidence in TEC. This will help us strengthen our knowledge of technology and make the necessary improvements to help us demonstrate the benefits for technology.

5.3.2 The Co-bots pilot will test a wearable Co-bot that can support a Health and/or Social Care Professional in the lifting and transferring of people, in Spring 2022. The Co-bot is worn around the waist and lower back, and detects the signals made between the brain and muscles, converting this into motion. Fig. 1 illustrates how the co-bot is worn.



Fig. 1 – The HAL BB04 ‘Co-bot’

Source: [CYBERDYNE.JP](#)

Video Demonstration: [Cobots - Collaborative Robots in Care - YouTube](#)

- 5.3.3 We will test this technology with our Reablement service for 6 months. In this time, we will observe if the health and wellbeing of professionals and people improve, as well as if this technology could reduce the number of 'double-up' requests for support- this means when two care workers are required to deliver care and support to people.
- 5.3.4 ASC is also researching into other TEC solutions that could be piloted and implemented to support people. We are being 'Technology Agnostic' in our research – this means to look at existing problems or opportunities and then identify what solutions are available, recognising that not 'one size fits all'. To do this, we are working with ASC social work teams, commissioning & contracts teams, and Health partners to create a plan for innovation, by Spring 2022.
- 5.3.5 As part of our research, we will look at how applications could be used to support people's self-care, and what opportunities there are to work with Health partners.
- 5.3.6 ASC is also embedding a new culture change around TEC, with focus on several pieces of work:
- Deliver 'Support Sequence' training to social care professionals.
 - Understand the resource requirements of the service.
 - Provide professionals with opportunities to learn about the TEC offer.
 - Improve the TEC referral process to include more feedback from professionals and people.
- 5.3.7 Starting with the Support Sequence training – The Support Sequence is a model for ASC assessment. It is designed to help social work staff recognise all the resources available to a person to support their outcomes. The use of technology to support people is step two of seven. Training will be delivered in Spring 2022.
- 5.3.8 Work to help understand the resource requirements of the service will also be delivered in Spring 2022. The delivery of further learning opportunities and improvements to the referral process will come later.

6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

6.1 Financial implications

The increased use of technology is an important part of the department's strategy to suppress the increase in care package costs. One off funds will be used to trial the use of new equipment both for care providers (for example the Cobots) or for clients, to determine their cost effectiveness and whether these items should be added to our current offer.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance

6.2 Legal implications

It is understood that there is an existing provision in place for the Telecare Services any, proposal to increase the technology offer will need to be in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules and in line with existing contractual terms.

Any re-commissioning of services will need to be in compliance with the Authority's internal Contract Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended).

Engagement of legal and procurement teams should be sought as required.

Mannah Begum, Principal Lawyer (Commercial) Ext: 1423

6.3 Equalities implications

There are no direct equality implications arising from the report as it is to provide an update on ASC's current care technology offer and how it could be improved.

Care Technologies can support the delivery of existing care and prevent formal services from being required and can enable people to live more safely in their own homes avoiding admission to hospital, thereby leading to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics.

It is important as the project moves forward that any scheduled engagement is accessible and inclusive.

Care technologies can improve the equality of the service through improving access and broadening the scope of the service. A cultural change can enable the Council to benefit from advancements in care technology as they arise, aiding the shift towards a preventative approach.

Surinder Singh, Equalities Officer, Ext 37 4148

6.4 Climate Emergency implications

There is potential for technology procurement to have a significant carbon footprint due to both the materials and energy used in its' production and its energy use whilst in operation. Therefore where technology and equipment is procured the council's sustainable procurement guidance should be followed, including consideration of energy and resource efficiency, limiting waste and eventual reuse/recycling. Where procurement is carried out by partners they should also be required or encouraged to consider these issues as appropriate to the service and contract.

However, it should also be recognised that use of care technology has the potential to reduce carbon emissions. For example, this could include where preventative measures might reduce the number of in-person care journeys and travel emissions required over time.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

7. Background information and other papers:

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1: All Age Care Technology Strategy 2020-2024; plain text

Appendix 2: Examples of Leicester City Council's Care Technology offer

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

10. Is this a "key decision"? If so, why?

No – This is a report to provide Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission with an overview.