

# Social Care and Education – All Age Care Technology Strategy: 2020- 2024

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## About the strategy

This All Age Care Technology Strategy has been written to help staff who work to promote independence, understand the important role that Care Technology plays in achieving this and the work required to improve the department's use of technology.

The strategy illustrates the department's aims and ambitions to develop the use of care technology, details who we would like to develop the current offer for, and provides an overview of the actions that will need to be completed so that we move to a position of thinking 'TEC first' to achieve the best outcomes for people.

The strategy also looks at current and emerging technologies for the health and social care sector so that we can aspire to do more for the people who use our services.

This strategy is a working document and will change over its lifespan to reflect changes made to local strategies and key legislation. The strategy and opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring organisations will be reviewed and updated by a departmental oversight group on an annual basis.

## Introduction

*Care Technology* can be an umbrella term that encapsulates a range of supportive technologies. It includes assistive technology, telecare, telehealth, and emerging technologies like the use of robotics, virtual reality, and software & apps.

*Technology Enabled Care* (TEC) is the proactive application of Care Technology to help people achieve their desired outcomes. TEC approaches to technology are person-centric and Technology Agnostic.

Social Care and Education's current Care Technology offer has enabled independence in people, provided safer living environments to live in, and has prevented or negated the need for costly support – **but more needs to be achieved.**

*There are currently:*

- Gaps in the department's knowledge in using technology to support people.
- Opportunities to expand the offer to support more people with more technology.
- Benefits to using technology to support people, that are not widely understood.

The department's current technology offer is predominantly based on telecare provision with additional assistive technologies to largely support independent living in adults, and educational attainment in children with SEND.

## National and local context

The increasing use of Care Technologies can both increase the Council's compliance with key national legislation and support the strategic direction of Social Care and Education.

*At a national level:*

- The Care Act, 2014 - Care Technologies can support the delivery of existing care and prevent formal services from being required.
- The Health & Social Care Act, 2012 - Care Technologies can enable people to live in their own homes safely and avoid hospital admission.
- The SEND Code of Practice, 2014 - Technology can support children and young people in education and preparing them for adulthood.

*In Leicester:*

- All Age Commissioning Strategy, 2020 - Care Technologies can support the outcomes that people wish to achieve and keep them safe.
- Joint Carers Strategy, 2018-2021 - Technology for carers is key in enabling and supporting them, but barriers to access are common.
- Prevention and Sustainability Action Plan - Care Technologies have an essential role in making sure that the right support is provided at the right time.

... These are some examples whereby a proactive approach to utilising Care Technology (or TEC approach) can help the department achieve more for the people we support.

## Local need

The combination of an increasing, ageing population and a growing gap in social care funding is contributing towards an escalating pressure in managing the demand for social care services.

By 2035, there will be 28,212 more people living in Leicester. This will mean more children, young people and adults in need of support.

### **Without intervention, by 2035, in Leicester:**

- Over 10,000 more people will have their day-to-day affected by long-term illness.
- 48% increase in older people admitted to hospital due to a fall.
- Near 50% increase in people living in care homes.

Source: IPC via POPPI and PANSI, 2019

In addition; Leicester has several additional risk factors that may lead to an increased need for personalised support:

- People born in Leicester are less likely to live healthier for longer.
- People born in Leicester are less likely to live a disability-free life for longer.
- People born in Leicester are more likely to live in lower income families.

Source: Public Health England

## The benefits of Care Technology

Delivering services that can both enable people and prevent care need will be paramount to managing the demand for social care and education intervention. Care Technology is recognised for its ability to deliver and is increasingly used to provide many benefits.

### *Care Technology can:*

- Deliver the outcomes that people wish to achieve – improving health and wellbeing.
- Reduce the reliance on hospital-based care and facilitate appropriate intervention.
- Provide useful insight into the people that we support – enabling bespoke services to maximise independence.

Across several local authorities, the proactive use of Care Technology has yielded benefits for the people that it supports and for Councils themselves:

*Expanding the Care Technology offer* is providing a variety of novel technological solutions to vulnerable people and carers – supporting people at home.

*Providing a TEC First approach* is supporting many people with complex needs in achieving outcomes that otherwise would be met with increasingly costly commissioned services.

*Exploring different ways to introduce technology* is maximising hospital capacity by efficiently discharging patients and avoiding unnecessary admissions.

## Ambition and aims

Care Technology has an important role in meeting outcomes for people and the department. In Leicester, we would like to build on the successes we have seen in using Care Technology to develop a new approach: to think 'TEC First'. To achieve this ambition, three key aims have been identified:

1. *Strengthen our knowledge:* What looks 'good?' - Staff working in the Social Care and Education department have good knowledge of Care Technology, including its use, benefits and availability. The development of this knowledgebase supports the increased use of technology to help people achieve their outcomes – facilitating a TEC First approach.
2. *Improve access:* What looks 'good?' - People that have outcomes to achieve, and the care organisations who help to achieve them are provided with further opportunities to access Care Technology. Emerging technologies and the approach to using them are significant to think TEC First when delivering outcomes for the people we support.
3. *Demonstrate the benefits:* What looks 'good?' - Care Technology is understood across the department for its benefits to both support people in achieving their outcomes and sustain the department's financial efforts to support people. Data driven models that monitor the impact of Care Technology are established to provide evidence of our TEC First approach.

## Carers

A carer is 'anyone who looks after someone, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, substance misuse or a mental health need cannot cope without their support'. The [Joint Carers Strategy](#) has several guiding principles, of which technology features as important to assisting a carer in their role.

### *Local Picture*

There are over six and a half million carers in the UK and nearly 31,000 in Leicester. It is estimated that carers in Leicester provide £677 million worth of support ever year whilst maintaining their own health and wellbeing.

### *Key Drivers*

The nature of caring for someone can have negative financial, physical, emotional, and mental consequences for carers; in 2018 over half of carers in Leicester reported that they were not getting enough sleep or eating well; and had experienced physical or mental ill-health in the past 12 months.

We know from testimonials by carers that technology can help them perform their caring role and try to reduce evidence of carer strain, above. However, not knowing what technology can do, and how to request it are significant barriers to carers benefitting from its use.

**To achieve more for carers, our approach to technology must be:**

- The first point of call for all carers and easily accessible.
- Carer-centric to support them in their role.
- Intuitive to include emerging technology.

## Vulnerable people

By vulnerable person, this strategy identifies people who have difficulty in performing routine tasks to support their wellbeing. It includes people of all ages who may need social care or education assistance.

### *Local Picture*

In Leicester, there are approximately 7910 children and young people receiving SEND support from a school or college. There are also over 5,000 adults receiving long term support provided by Leicester City Council for various difficulties.

### *Key Drivers*

People with a disability face multiple barriers to education, independence and employment. Building on the success of our current technology offer would help more people achieve more – breaking down barriers.

In Social Care and Education, there are varying degrees of knowledge and confidence in using Care Technology. Addressing this knowledge gap would increase the confidence and appetite for using technology. - A 'think TEC first' approach can promote independence and help people to achieve their outcomes.

**To achieve more for people, our approach to technology must be:**

- Developed and understood by all so that more can benefit.
- Proactive and deliver the outcomes that people wish to achieve.
- Expansive so that the right tech suits the right person.

## Emerging technology

The Care Technology marketplace is ever-evolving. We have identified the technologies that are being piloted else-where, by the adoption of a TEC approach.

*Smart things*, devices that connect and talk to each-other over the internet are supporting people in home and improving lives.

*Virtual reality*, as an 'alternative pain-killer', teacher of sensitive topics, and interactive memory aid.

*Robotics*, that identify emotion and facilitate social interaction and support carers with heavy lifting.

*Predictive services and AI*, that help predict trends in hospital activity, and use data to support care planning.

*Apps*, from an NHS approved library designed to help self-manage, as well as bespoke solutions.

The use of emerging technology is providing new and innovative solutions to help people achieve their outcomes. Their adoption by other local authorities would not have been possible without an approach where TEC is considered first.

## Key priorities

Priorities have been identified to help achieve this strategy's vision. The priorities are described below and continue in the next page.

1. Engage with Care Management Teams in Adult Social Care and Social Work and Education Teams in Children's and Education to show the existing technology offer and find out 'what is missing?'.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge, improve access, and demonstrate the benefits aims in the strategy.*
2. Provide targeted, regular opportunities for technology providers to demonstrate their products to our social work teams across the department.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge and improve access aims in the strategy.*
3. Develop a data-driven model, based on technology user experience, that demonstrates the humanistic and financial benefits of technology.  
*This links to the demonstrate the benefits aim in the strategy.*
4. Design and implement a pathway for carers to receive information on or have access to Care Technology.  
*This links to the improve access aim in the strategy.*
5. Create a more dynamic method for the department to purchase technology more efficiently, that provides opportunity to use emerging technologies and fosters good relationships with suppliers.  
*This links to the improve access aim in the strategy.*
6. Adapt guidance for schools and colleges to include the use of technology to support the educational outcomes of SEND children and young people.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge, improve access, and demonstrate the benefits aims in the strategy.*
7. Implement a 'feedback loop' to understand how technology is helping people achieve their outcomes and/ or preventing or delaying further support.  
*This links to the demonstrate the benefits aim in the strategy.*
8. Develop a Social Care and Education-wide TEC Champions Network capable of sharing their knowledge on the topic.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge, improve access, and demonstrate the benefits aims in the strategy.*
9. Investigate the future of technology, to bring advances in Care Technology to Leicester.  
*This links to the improve access aim in the strategy.*
10. Review the technology in our current portfolio to make sure it is compatible with systematic changes to telephony happening from 2023.  
*This links to the improve access and demonstrate the benefits aims in the strategy.*
11. Look into how technology is provided in adult social care and prepare our service for an increase in appetite for it.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge and improve access aims in the strategy.*

12. Take advantage of funding opportunities to develop on the existing technology offer and bring innovation to Leicester.  
*This links to the improve access aim in the strategy.*
13. Provide opportunities for care and support providers to use technology to deliver their services with the person and their independence in mind.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge and improve access aims in the strategy.*
14. Understand the technology in place for children and young people with SEND, including where it is placed and how it is payed for.  
*This links to the strengthen our knowledge and improve access aims in the strategy.*

## Glossary

*Care Technology* - An umbrella term used to describe assistive technologies, telecare, telehealth, consumer technology, and software/apps.

*Assistive technology* - Products or systems that support and assist individuals... to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.

*Technology Enabled Care* - The proactive application of Care Technology to help people achieve their outcomes.

*Telecare* - Technology provided to people that offers a monitoring service. When an 'event' (like falling over, or remaining unresponsive) is triggered, the device will contact a call centre where there is help over-the-phone.

*LeicesterCare* - The Alarm Receiving Centre based in Leicester that installs assistive technology equipment and handles calls raised from telecare equipment.

*Artificial Intelligence or AI* - Computer systems or programs able to 'think like a human' to perform tasks, usually more efficiently.