

CSO / Telehealth

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, England

Challenges

Cornwall, which makes up the south-western corner of England, is in many ways exceptional, but it also faces unique challenges in the area of health. The average age in Cornwall is trending upwards, with close to 1 in 4 inhabitants being 65 years of age or older. Twenty-one per cent of the population of Cornwall suffer from some form of chronic disease.

In 2007 the National Health Service in the UK launched a large-scale telemedicine project, which gave selected areas in the UK the opportunity to implement the latest telemedicine technology and thereby increase their services to outpatients with chronic diseases. Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust seized the opportunity and was chosen to implement one of three pilot projects.

Solution

Cornwall has chosen an integrated home-monitoring solution produced by the Danish company IntraMed and Tunstall, a UK company specialising in telehealth and telecare. The combination of IntraMed's CSO (Clinical System Organiser) and Tunstall's hardware met the stringent requirements put in place by Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust and the NHS, and the first patients came online in April 2008.

Home monitoring in Cornwall is intended for patients suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart failure and diabetes. The technology enables patients to perform the measurements and checks that up to now have involved a visit to their doctor, e.g., monitoring of blood pressure, weight, blood sugar and pulse oximetry. Information is sent instantly from the patient's own home to a central computer, where the information is monitored by health care personnel using IntraMed's CSO/Telehealth solution. The system triggers alarms if a patient's condition worsens beyond the individually-set parameters, and in this way rapid intervention can be initiated.

A clear example of the efficiency of the system was where an elderly diabetic patient avoided admittance to a hospital. Using CSO, a nurse noted that the patient's blood sugar was rising. This observation, together with the patient's response to questions about symptoms via his telemedicine unit at home, gave cause for concern. Following a discussion with the patient's GP the patient was diagnosed with ketoacidosis, which can have serious consequences. In this instance the medication was adjusted and the problem averted.

Results

In August 2009 Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust's telemedicine project reached a crucial milestone when the number of participants in the project reached 2000: this figure including 570 telemedicine patients, 530 telecare patients and a control group of 1100 people. Based on the successful pilot study, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust aims to make telehealth available throughout the region by 2011. Danish IntraMed will remain fully involved when Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust implements better and more effective telemedicine – today and into the future.

About Cornwall & Isles of Scilly

Cornwall is one of England's lowest socioeconomic areas, e.g. it is the poorest performer in the UK in terms of GDP per capita. It has areas of high crime, high unemployment, and poverty is commonplace. The poor socioeconomic conditions result in a poorer general state of populational health in Cornwall, and life expectancy is lower than elsewhere in the UK.

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust is the organisation administering and providing health care services to the population of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust is participating in the project "Whole System Demonstrator" in order to gain experience in the benefits of telemedicine and remote-monitoring of patients with acute disorders.

Learn more

Please contact the IntraMed staff for a demonstration at your convenience. Or check the newest developments at intramed.com

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