

# West Essex Virtual Hospital Service

West Provider Forum October 2023

**Working together**  
for a healthier future



# Background

- Virtual hospital service has been running since December 22 in West Essex (merged with patient @ home April 2023)
- All system partners can refer into the service
- Supports primary/community services with prevention of admission
- Supports acute services to discharge patients sooner
- Supports local delivery of urgent and emergency care access recovery and primary care access recovery
- Key part of ICS winter planning for 23/24
- **Capacity 80 patients at any one time, increasing to 106 from December 2023**
- **Service is currently under utilised (c50% capacity used) so keen to promote to maximise capacity as we head into winter**



# Virtual Hospital Service in West Essex

**8am – 8pm 7 days a week Referral and Query Hotline Tel: 07581 013636**  
**Or via the CCC 03001235433 [epunft.carecoordinationcentre.west.2023@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.carecoordinationcentre.west.2023@nhs.net)**

## Service offer

- Remote monitoring and in-person care for up to 4 weeks
- Response to Frailty related syndromes
- Acute Respiratory Infection
- Heart failure symptoms & diuresis management
- COPD exacerbation
- Response to infectious conditions requiring antibiotic therapies delivered by H@H team



## Referral criteria

- Registered with a west Essex GP
- NEWS2 score of 4 or less
- Consent obtained for care in their usual place of residence

The Virtual Hospital team includes a medical consultant, advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs), and nurses, with easy access to advice and care from dietitians, the palliative care team, social care the community respiratory and heart failure team, and other specialist services

## The benefits seen in existing virtual wards including Hospital at Home services



Click to download a catalogue of evidence, covering different themes, pathways and countries

Research and studies are providing strong evidence for the benefits of virtual wards.

\* The data below is based on observations from single site analyses relating to frailty.

### Patient choice and preferences

>99%

Over 99% of patients on existing virtual wards would recommend the service \*



Treatment and care in a more comfortable home environment.

Keeping patients in a place where they would prefer to be cared for in future

23% of patients treated in a virtual ward achieved a more independent social care outcome than they would have in an acute setting.\*

### Reducing health inequality



Development of virtual wards offers opportunities to address healthcare inequalities in target areas including COPD and frailty.

### Patient wellbeing and safety

5x

Patients are five times less likely to acquire an infection \* when treated on a virtual ward compared to an acute setting

8x

Patients are eight times less likely to experience functional decline \* whilst in a virtual ward compared to equivalent treatment in an acute setting



Avoiding potential harms in a hospital setting, such as falls and delirium



More holistic assessment in home circumstances

### Capacity and productivity

2.5x

Two and a half times fewer patients treated on a virtual ward are readmitted \* to frailty beds than the national acute benchmark



Frees up physical beds for other patients who require an in-patient admission



Improves integration between hospital and community services



Improved staff experience and opportunities



Enabled by technology including remote monitoring

# Patient Story

Patient Joyce Kirstein, 79, from Buckhurst Hill, had received hospital treatment for pneumonia and partial kidney failure. She was referred to the virtual hospital service by her GP after being discharged.

Joyce and her niece Vikki Bromley were pleased with the fast response they received from the team. She received her initial appointment and remote monitoring equipment on the same day.

And when she needed a prescription on a Sunday, Vikki was able to phone an Advanced Clinical Practitioner to get Joyce's medication within two hours.

They also found the blood pressure and oximeter equipment easy to use, despite Joyce's initial concerns she wouldn't know what to do.

Joyce, who prefers being at home than in hospital, said: "I think it's an amazing. The slightest change in the figures and I get a phone call asking 'are you alright?'"

"I was so nervous of it in the beginning. When the equipment came and it was in the box I felt overwhelmed. I just do it automatically now, I don't think about it."

Joyce's health is improving and she has been able to stay independent at home, with support from Vikki.

She said: "I started off unable to walk from my home to the road and Vikki was taking me in a wheelchair. Now I've started walking again."

Vikki added: "She felt very safe knowing there was always someone she could talk to if there was any concerns."





# Stakeholder Feedback

I just wanted to give you some feedback, I made a referral to the VH on Friday afternoon and spoke to a lovely nurse who accepted the referral and arranged remote monitoring / bloods / regular observation and bridging services for the patient in record time! I am really pleased with the service given and I am sure the patient / his family were happy.

West Essex GP

I referred this patient to Virtual Hospital (we were sent an email recently about this service starting last week) and I have had a nice experience. Today I have received a letter from them summarizing the outcome and I have been reassured

West Essex GP



I want to congratulate the VH service. I have used for patients on my caseload and they have received a wonderful service and the VH team have been very supportive for me.

Community Respiratory Nurse

I have used the Virtual Hospital for two patients in the last few weeks and think "it is brilliant and works really very well – thank you"

Community Heart Failure Nurse



Hertfordshire and  
West Essex Integrated  
Care System



# Contacts

- Virtual hospital team – Direct line 07581 013636 email: [epunft.virtualhospital@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.virtualhospital@nhs.net)
- Tracey Casson - VH/CCC Project Manager [t.casson@nhs.net](mailto:t.casson@nhs.net)
- Lesley Hanks- Operational Services Manager for Unplanned Care [lesleyhanks@nhs.net](mailto:lesleyhanks@nhs.net)
- West Essex Care Coordination Centre 03001235433
- [epunft.carecoordinationcentre.west.2023@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.carecoordinationcentre.west.2023@nhs.net)



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