

Enhanced Health in Care Homes: Reconditioning Initiative

Dear Managers,

I work as a GP and Specialty Doctor in Care of the Elderly in North Devon. I am involved in delivering Enhanced Health in Care Homes for the Torridge Health and Barnstaple Alliance Primary Care Networks.

As you know, the Covid 19 pandemic has had a huge negative impact on Care Homes. Due to prolonged inactivity brought about by the pandemic, many older people have experienced significant physical, psychological, and functional decline. This process is called deconditioning and it leads to increased falls and increased rates of hospital admissions. Those with dementia and those living in social care settings have been the worst affected.

I am emailing about an exciting new initiative to support local CQC registered Care Homes to help their residents to become more active, improve their strength and balance, reduce falls and “live longer better.”

What are the aims of the project?

By carrying out this initiative in partnership with you, we hope to increase activity levels and to improve physical health and mental wellbeing in care home residents in North Devon. We hope to work with care homes to develop opportunities for increased access to strength and balance and other activities. We would like to work with you to address deconditioning in our local care home population with the aim of reducing falls and subsequent hospital admissions.

We would like to work with you in the following ways:

1. **Support from a Therapist or Activity Worker.** They will visit the care home to provide a holistic review of activity, signpost to activities available online and within local community and link in with local organisations/volunteers to provide activity that best suits the needs of the residents and care home. They will also work with care home staff and other HCPs involved in care of residents to promote awareness of how increased activity can benefit physical and mental health.
2. **Fund for personalised support for Care Homes.** This is a fund that care homes can bid for to increase activity levels in their residents, that will meet the specific needs of the resident and the CH itself. The amount of money available to each care home depends on the number of beds the care home has. The attached document shows all local CQC registered care homes, bed numbers and amount of funding available to each.
3. **Support from our Co-ordinator.** Our co-ordinator, Liv Sanford will be managing the bids process for care homes applying for funding. She will help guide care homes through the process and will be involved in measuring the outcomes of this initiative

by conducting some baseline and follow up surveys. She will also be promoting the Live Longer Better approach.

What's in it for your Care Home?

- Improved physical health and mental wellbeing of your residents
- Decreased falls and hospital admissions with positive implications for staffing
- Improved staff confidence and wellbeing
- Improved community links- sustainable initiative
- Free staff education and training
- Allows upskilling of care home teams e.g. Older Person's Integrated Care (OPIC)- can better support your residents and staff
- Surveys will be done remotely and will not be time consuming

What happens next?

If you are interested in getting involved, please email our co-ordinator Liv Sanford liv.sanford@nhs.net by 27th May 2022

Liv will then send out two short questionnaires: Barthel Index score and World Health Organisation (WHO) wellbeing questionnaire. These should be completed for 10 random residents. Liv will also send you a survey monkey questionnaire, where you will be asked to record the results of the Barthel Index and WHO wellbeing questionnaires and to answer some brief questions for your whole home.

Once the survey monkey questionnaire is complete, Liv will send you the form to apply for funding for your care home, along with guidance on the process. We will also then link you in with our Therapist/Activity Worker.

I have attached a PowerPoint presentation I gave at the Northern Care Home Locality Forum meeting which gives more detail on this initiative. Any questions, please ask.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Kind regards

Dr Fiona Duncan

GP and Specialty Doctor in Healthcare for the Older Person, North Devon