

WORKSHOP 2



DIGITAL CARING NETWORK

WHAT WAS THE BIG IDEA?

Idea was originally raised by Guild Care at a Health and Wellbeing Partnership meeting earlier in 2015

The idea is to create a digital means of communication and coordination for a group of people concerned about the wellbeing of someone who is in need of some support. A typical scenario where this would be useful is one in which an elderly, ill or disabled person is living on their own a long way from family members and close friends, but there are people nearby who are willing to help out or offer company, or who would be willing if they were invited. These people will not necessarily be well connected to each other. Co-ordination of their efforts through a digital support network could make it easier to extend offers of support while reducing duplication of effort, and at the same time providing reassurance to people who cannot visit as often as they would like. Where appropriate, the person benefitting from the support could themselves be a member of the network, but this would not be essential.

Examples of existing platforms that could provide inspiration on this, are Rally Round (which enables you to organise help whose use is dependent on the local CCG having bought a licence) and Task Rabbit (which enables you to outsource tasks for a fee).

- <https://www.rallyroundme.com/welcome>
- <https://www.taskrabbit.co.uk/>

WHAT WAS DISCUSSED?

- For reasons of patient confidentiality, medical professionals should not be linked into a network of family / friends / informal carers – and in every case, the need for privacy has to be respected.
- The facilities to be provided by an app could be expected to differ according to the circumstances and wishes, both of the person being cared for, and of those concerned for them.
- There might well already be an app (or apps) free of charge, that would suit many circumstances. (Examples suggested included Google shared calendars and WhatsApp).
- There is a need for hubs to provide carers with information on digital possibilities (current or to be built). Suppliers of personal alarms, for example, could possibly provide such information.
- Carers would need to be convinced of the benefit to them of using any app before being willing to engage with one. There might be a need for some training, especially given that many in a caring network may themselves of an age not to be comfortable with the most recent technology.
- Input from remote monitoring devices (of room temperature for example) could be linked into an app facilitating a caring network.
- A caring network opens possibilities for links with relieving loneliness (for example, person not liking to walk alone might welcome opportunity to walk dog of housebound person).

WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN NOW?

It was suggested that Guild Care could look into the possibility of conducting some small scale research (or facilitating help to do carry out some research). The research would look into real local cases where a vulnerable person is helped by several people, to investigate whether they would like to communicate through a digital platform and if so, how.

The findings could then be reported back through Waves Ahead and through the Adur and Worthing Health and Wellbeing Partnership for All Ages (HWPAA) where a decision will be made on next steps.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Even if you were not at the Conference or in the workshop, if you like what you have read and would like to find out more or get involved with making this community initiative happen, please email community.planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk and we'll put you in touch with Guildcare and/or the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.