

Proactive support for care home teams during Lockdown at Saffron Health Partnership

VIDEO GROUP CLINICS CASE STUDY



General Practice: maintaining services and responding to COVID

What we did



"I feel less isolated knowing others have similar experiences"

What changed and improved?

OUR CHALLENGE

We are a practice with 17,700 patients. We support a lot of care homes and have a dedicated care home nurse. We wanted to find ways of supporting care home teams more individually. During Lockdown, 25% of our care home nurses' caseload died. Our care home nurse was completing death certificates over the phone. It was very demanding. We wanted to support care home teams to cope better with the paperwork.

A second wave of COVID was anticipated in Leicester. With new patients registering and going into care homes, we also wanted to support teams with testing. We did this by setting up video group clinics (VGCs) with teams from multiple homes.

OUR GROUP CLINIC DESIGN

We ran three sessions. The GP and care home nurse invited a small team from each home to attend the VGC.

Using Microsoft Teams, the GP and care home nurse led the meeting together from the surgery, and supported a senior carer and manager to reflect and think through how to:

- Build confidence around processing death certificates, and
- Manage testing for COVID 19 in their care homes.

Being mindful of confidentiality concerns with VGCs (Saffron Health was a first wave VGC Sentinel), the team decided not to discuss individual patients initially, and so they did not need a Results Board.

EFFICIENCY GAINS

- The team has supported care homes to understand how to process death certificates correctly, which has saved time and helped the care home nurse cope better with the volume of certification COVID has created
- Saffron Health was able to raise care homes' concerns about the local testing system (tests getting lost) with local COVID planning committees to ensure rapid improvement of the local testing system and processes

CLINICAL IMPACT

- Care homes better understand the implications of positive, and limitations of negative test results, which is helping them respond and keep both staff and residents safe
- Doing tests with people with cognitive impairment, and tests subsequently getting lost was frustrating. The VGC helped teams realise they were all in the same boat, which was comforting for the staff

EXPERIENCE OF CARE

- The care home nurse and care home teams felt better supported through a challenging time
- The GP gained insight into the challenges the care home nurse and care home teams were facing, which built empathy
- One carer opened up. As she talked, others recognised their own frustrations with the flaws in the local testing system. The GP was able to ensure their crucial feedback was heard. Staff felt listened to and this helped them cope

"I have developed a much better understanding of the challenges and a closer working relationship with my care home nurse as a result of us running VGCs together" GP

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