



NHSmail in action at Swanton Care and Community Limited

As a social care provider with an extensive national footprint, Swanton Care collaborates and interacts with a range of health and other social care organisations. A key element of this involves the sharing of information, which often contains sensitive or person identifiable data (PID). Swanton Care has implemented NHSmail as the most efficient solution which facilitates the secure sharing of information.

Benefits:

The realised benefits of using NHSmail at Swanton Care:

- expectation from other providers for secure email met
- more efficient process for receiving referrals and discharge summaries
- time saved from posting, faxing and chasing information
- greater ease and convenience of sending information

Increased collaboration, from being part of a wider trusted network. Swanton Care provides residential and supported living care, as well as support to individuals who suffer from complex conditions.

Swanton Care's offering ranges from specialist autism care and learning disability support, to mental health. It also includes specialist nurse-led acquired brain injury and neuro-rehabilitation care.

The organisation employs 850 staff who operate from 28 locations, covering the South West, West Midlands, North East, Scotland and East Anglia. Each service comprises a service manager, team leaders and support workers.

The absence of a secure email service was a concern to both Swanton Care and other organisations, which affected information-sharing as well as the use of post, fax or

telephone which took up a considerable amount of time and effort. This had an impact across the following range of activities:

- sharing of sensitive information with local authorities such as Deprivation of Liberty (DOLS) applications, housing bidding and enquiries, safeguarding incidents and enquiries, change of circumstances for example, financial assessment, changes in need.
- sharing information relevant to police and probation services
- receipt of discharge summaries and admission notes from local hospitals
- receipt of referrals to the acquired brain injury and neuro-rehabilitation unit
- sharing of referrals, community psychiatrist nurse (CPN) reviews and care planning with mental health trusts
- sharing of GP patient records and referrals
- funding enquiries with clinical commissioning groups (CCGs)
- ambulance service – observations and safeguarding.

Marcus Taylor (Swanton Care IT Manager) says that the organisation recognised the need to be more forward-thinking and adopt secure email, in order to 'be part of a wider trusted family'. The central driving question, Marcus says, was 'Do we have secure email?'

Swanton Care first made contact with NHS Digital in July 2017, having previously taken steps to complete the Information Governance Toolkit (IGTK) - a prerequisite for social care organisations seeking to adopt NHSmail. The allocation of NHSmail accounts by NHS Digital occurred not long after, in August 2017, making Swanton Care the first social care organisation to use the self-management portal.

The majority of accounts have been assigned to staff, with all accounts expected to be allocated by early 2018. Swanton Care applies effective governance of NHSmail accounts. Any requests for new accounts are added to a waiting list. Account usage is reviewed every three months and where a user has not used an account, a period of grace is given before that account is deleted and reallocated to another person on the waiting list.

Using NHSmail, Swanton Care now meets the expectations of other providers for secure email. Amongst the other benefits, this means that the care home can now send Deprivation of Liberty (DOLS) application forms and change of circumstance information, securely and with ease and any sensitive information and documents containing contracts data can now also be readily shared with commissioners and local authorities, at no risk. Unlike before, discharge summaries, referrals and admissions notes can now be sent securely and effectively from local hospitals, to the acquired brain injury and neuro rehabilitation unit. This has all contributed to making processes more efficient.

Through using NHSmail, there is now less need to expend time posting, faxing or chasing information. Where an urgent understanding of user-specific needs is required from other health care providers, NHSmail has helped to facilitate this ensuring that

information, such as outcomes of a community psychiatrist nurse (CPN) review, is quickly received and incorporated into a care plan.

Swanton Care recognises that good communication underpins effective care delivery and so having a secure communication tool, such as NHSmail, is essential.

Marcus says, “We have been asked in England, across different services, for some time whether we have secure email and we have had to say no, until now...”

Having access to NHSmail clearly provides the necessary assurance to Swanton Care’s collaborative partners that they can be trusted to securely send and receive confidential or sensitive information. This is expected to widen collaboration, as Swanton Care are now part of a wider family of trusted organisations.

The NHS Digital team is currently rolling out NHSmail to social care organisations and an [online toolkit](#), comprising guidance and benefits information, is available. If you would like more information, please contact feedback@nhs.net.

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