

The Uplands

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NHSmile in action at The Uplands at Oxon Care Home

The Uplands at Oxon Care Home has been using NHSmile since November 2014. Since then, a number of existing processes have been replaced by NHSmile, to great effect. NHS Digital spoke to Carey Bloomer (pictured below), Registered Manager at The Uplands, to find out more.



The Uplands at Oxon Care Home provides care and treatment to all adults over the age of 18. It offers a wide range of care including palliative care; rehabilitation; discharge to assess; community work; end of life and complex needs care. It has 81 nursing beds, 40 of which are dedicated for dementia patients.

The initial pilot project, undertaken by NHS Digital, undertook the huge task of mapping the many daily information flows to and from the busy care home and discovered that 90% of communications were faxed.

Then, Carey told us 'On a daily basis, I have to communicate with social workers; hospital discharge liaison, commissioners, GPs and School of Health staff. With most of the communication taking place via fax, it meant that I constantly had to leave my office to run downstairs and collect faxes from the machine or documents from the printer.

Not only did this take time out of my day but there was also the risk that anyone could see confidential information on the fax machine before I got there'.

Working with the care home, NHS Digital introduced new processes that used NHSmail to reduce the dependency on fax and improve the security of communications.

Carey told us 'NHSmail has made decision making much quicker. Before, I used to have conversations about patient cases over the phone. Now, it's all done by email which is quicker and means I have a record of what is discussed and agreed.'

'I receive assessment forms from hospital discharge liaison, district nurses and GPs much more quickly and decision making is also now much easier and faster. Before NHSmail, I'd need to wait for confirmation that a fax had been sent to me, leave my desk, collect the fax, get back up to my desk and review the information.'

'Now, information such as fact-finding assessments (FFA), social care assessments and EMIS reports comes through to me on email and I can immediately access these from anywhere and ring for more information if necessary - this makes such a big difference. Information can be uploaded directly to our iCare Health system, which takes away a lot of the administrative burden and I can also work remotely from home if I need to.'

The NHS Digital team recorded that, by implementing NHSmail, there was now a 90% reduction (up from 80%, two years ago) in printing initial needs assessment forms and a one-hour time saving per week on administration of GP paperwork.

The local university has actually now agreed to email dates of student placements using NHSmail where previously they had refused, as no secure method was available. With a shared mailbox now in place for receipt of discharge summaries, they have managed to eradicate the use of fax for transmitting health information and data. The care home has managed to achieve IGTK level 3 compliance, which is something Carey is proud of.

Carey summarised, 'I like the security and speed of NHSmail. If we get to the point where other nursing homes have NHSmail accounts, when we're discharging patients it will make things so much easier.'

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.