



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

COVID-19

Glasgow City Council

Victoria Gardens Care Home

To combat social isolation and loneliness, the care homes accessed tablets and used smartphone technology to provide video calls with families and continue activities virtually

Context

Glasgow City Council operates five residential care homes for older people which offer high quality care and support. In line with Scottish Government guidance, the care home sector was locked down from mid-March 2020 to protect residents and staff, with only essential services provided. This meant that older people in care homes lost essential links to their families and friends, leading to a particular risk of social isolation and loneliness. To address this, the care homes accessed tablets and used smartphone technology to provide video calls with families. Activity coordinators also continued to engage with local communities remotely to provide opportunities to participate wherever possible in a virtual way.

Development

This initiative was developed very quickly in response to Covid-19. Equipment was purchased, such as tablets, to connect residents through existing WiFi connections. Contacts with local schools had already been established and they were quick to respond to the challenge to support residents.

Implementation

The Victoria Gardens Care Home worked in cooperation with local schools, nurseries and activity providers to keep older people connected. For example it:

- Engages local nursery and school pupils to send video messages to residents
- Encourages local school children to write letters to residents
- Features letters written from community members wrote on a tree within the reception area for people to see

- Uses tablets for weekly contact with family and friends to reduce stress and loneliness for residents and keep social contact with outside world
- Live-streams performances from local community singing groups into the care home
- Uses YouTube to access church services
- Streams reminiscence materials from local community dementia groups
- Works with Lingo Flamingo to provide language lessons weekly on a virtual basis
- Provides virtual access to the Football Memories project via Scottish Football Association and Alzheimer's Scotland
- Uses the Near Me system for virtual GP appointments and access to Care Inspectorate.



Victoria Gardens Care Home, Glasgow

Review

The initiative – working with people and technology to keep residents connected – has been very successful in keeping residents in touch with their families and friends over the six months from March. Local community and third sector groups have found new and innovative ways to provide contact and engagement with residents and this has been largely successful. It is hoped that this approach will continue and be expanded upon with local schools. The Council is also looking at ways to remotely support young people who are doing their Foundation Apprenticeship in social care via virtual contacts with the care homes to enhance their learning experience. Access to additional technology to support both staff and residents is considered to be worth the investment in the longer term.

For further information contact:

Janice Young

Service Manager Health and Social Care Partnership - Glasgow City Council

Janice.Young@sw.glasgow.gov.uk | 0141 287 0555 | www.glasgow.gov.uk