

Improving care for nursing home patients whilst reducing hospital admissions

People living in care and nursing homes across Lincoln are benefitting from a revolutionary service which is helping to keep them out of hospital.

The Lincoln Care Home Service is a team of doctors, nurses and therapists from United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust who is visiting every nursing and residential home in the Lincoln area over the next two years. It is the first project of its kind in the country.



What does the team's assessment involve?

The team assesses every resident of every home and which includes reviewing and assessing:

- Current medications
- Cognition
- Mobility
- Mental capacity
- Future care needs.

The Lincoln Care Home Team. Pictured (left to right) are Consultant in Older People's Service Dr Gill Garden, Physiotherapist Lindsey Mills, Nurse Karen Downing and Occupational Therapist Graham Wilson

By the end of the period they aim to have reviewed more than 1,000 people in 22 homes.

The work they do is about assessing the current condition of each resident, the care that they are being provided with and how that can be improved so that they do not end up in hospital unnecessarily.

They have a nutritionist, occupational therapist, doctor, nurses and a physiotherapist as part of the team so that, together with the resident and their family, they can look at the whole picture and ask how each person can be best cared for where they are. Some of the cases they see are residents nearing the end of their life. They can work together to make sure they have the best possible care at the end of their life, in the right place for them.

Empowering staff and communicating with GPs

The team also provide staff training and education in the nursing and residential homes, around areas including end of life care, falls and delirium. This empowers the staff to provide better care for their residents.

The team is also building relationships with local GPs, who are often the first port of call for residents of nursing and residential homes. This means that the residents get a more joined-up care and should also relieve pressure on local GPs.

The results

Results so far show that the work is reducing the number of people being admitted to hospital unnecessarily.

In the first three months since the team visited one care home in Lincoln, the number of hospital admissions for their residents reduced by 64% compared with the previous quarter.

Lucy Ettridge, Associate Director of Communications and Engagement