

Remote Monitoring Virtual Wards at Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust (LTHT)

Remote Monitoring Virtual Wards save Leeds Teaching Hospitals 3,228 bed days and an estimated £1.2 million, freeing up beds for better patient flow

About NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)

NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board is part of the West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, an integrated care system which includes NHS organisations, local authorities, Healthwatch, hospices, charities and the community voluntary and social enterprise sector. It covers a population area of 2.6 million people. The remote monitoring virtual ward (RMVW) at LTHT forms part of the home first programme under the Healthier Leeds Plan.

The challenge

Health services in England have been tasked with treating more patients at home through virtual wards, to cope with growing demand for beds. Through the adoption of virtual wards, the ICB wanted to reduce avoidable hospital admissions, support early discharge, ease pressure on inpatient beds and emergency departments and improve overall patient experience and health outcomes. LTHT and the West Yorkshire ICB have been working collaboratively to drive this service forward, enabling patients to be safely monitored and cared for in their own homes.

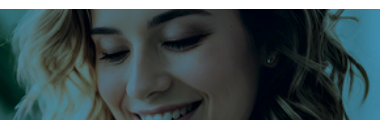
The solution

Following a central West Yorkshire procurement, Inhealthcare won the NHS contract to develop and expand virtual wards across Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, and Wakefield to support the delivery of safe and convenient care to people at home who would otherwise be in hospital.

The service has expanded from its initial six pathways to now cover 14 different pathways, including Cardiology, Emergency General Surgery, Urology, Oncology, Vascular, Neurosciences, Gastro and Respiratory, with further development of pathways in Heart Failure, Gynaecology and Trauma related services.

Patients or their caregivers are being empowered to take physiological measurements such as blood pressure, respiration rate and oxygen saturation and securely transmit their readings to care teams via a choice of digitally inclusive communication channels – mobile app, text message or traditional telephone.

Care teams have a single, centralised view of patient data to support clinical decision making and if any readings fall out of range, they will be alerted to enable early intervention.



Outcomes

The remote monitoring virtual ward service, which launched in September 2023, has savings 3,228 hospital bed days and achieved efficiency savings of £1.2 million in its first 12 months, building significantly on its early success when it helped 176 patients in its first six months.

543

patients

3,228

bed days saved

£1.2 million

cost savings



“The use of remote monitoring equipment as an adjunct to the virtual ward, increases the safety and efficiency of the service, as well as reducing the workload of the ward staff who would have to take time to make these recordings / observations.”

Muzahir Tayebjee – lead consultant for RMVW

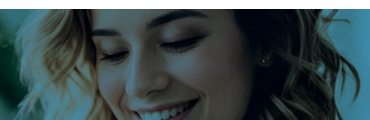
Adam Peckham-Cooper, lead consultant for emergency general surgery

“The remote monitoring virtual wards have been a game-changer for expeditiously managing patients in a different way safely and effectively. We have for many years held on to a varied set of patients in hospital beds awaiting investigations, interventions or just for ongoing observation. By using the bespoke pathways, we have managed to facilitate earlier discharges and streamline ambulatory care of patients, vastly improving patient experiences.”



“While developing a service that is directly assisting the NHS with the crisis of over-occupied beds, it has been rewarding to see our remote monitoring virtual wards come to life, enabling patients to be cared for in their own homes with the safety of technology. Remote monitoring is the most effective way in ensuring patients can be discharged safely but still receive excellent care.”

Abigail Uttley, service manager at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust



What makes Leeds' approach unique is our model of care. Operating within one of the country's largest teaching hospitals, we've developed a scalable system where specially trained nurses work across multiple specialities, supported by remote monitoring technology. This means we can help more patients while maintaining the highest standards of care.

Muzahir Tayebjee – lead consultant for RMVW

Patient case study

One of the first patients to use the service was Toni Bailey, a 28-year-old mother of two young children from Leeds who was admitted to hospital after Christmas with severe abdominal pain. After two weeks in hospital undergoing treatment for pancreatitis, she was able to join the virtual ward.



"Home is the best hospital in the world. I was desperate to get home to my family. It meant I could be in my own bed, eat my own food and be with my children to lift my spirits while being closely monitored by a brilliant team of nurses. If I hadn't had the opportunity to join the virtual ward, I believe I would have been ill a lot longer."

I was very happy with the experience on the remote monitoring virtual ward

"It allowed me to go home to my kids. The staff were amazing, always there when I needed support and went the extra mile to help me. The system is super easy to follow and takes only a few minutes, allowing me a proper rest at home. I would recommend virtual wards to anyone and would definitely use this service again."

Patient feedback has been positive with surveys showing the vast majority of respondents found the service easy to use, felt comfortable being monitored and spoke with clinicians when they needed to. Respondents added the virtual wards saved travel time to and from hospital and improved their health care experience.



The remote monitoring virtual ward is a great idea, I can't believe no one has thought of it sooner!!

Oncology patient

Fantastic to be back at home! Being back home has contributed to my speedy recovery!

EGS patient

Everyone on the RMVW team has been so friendly, the Inhealthcare app is straight forward to use!

Oncology patient

I am so grateful for the service, I am able to go home and see my family.

Urology patient

I am very grateful to go home as the hospital was too loud, I was very reassured by the 7 day RMVW service.

EGS patient

Overall great service to help me on the road to recovery whilst been in my home settings.

Oncology patient



Rob Webster CBE, chief executive of the NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and CEO lead for West Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, said:

"We have made good progress across our partnership on rolling out virtual wards. These are one of a range of ways we help people remain at home, with support to keep them safe and well. Technology is a major factor in making this a reality for thousands of people. I am delighted we have a partner to help ensure the health and care system delivers safe and effective care in the right place."

Alessia D'Angelo, senior sister for remote monitoring virtual wards, said:

"The technology is used extremely well in care pathways, offering patients reassurance at home, where anxiety may arise, particularly before procedures. It proves invaluable during hospital admissions, providing recent observations to aid decision-making.

Remote monitoring provides a crucial safety net when in-person appointments are unfeasible, enabling patients to share recent health readings for informed care decisions outside normal hours."

