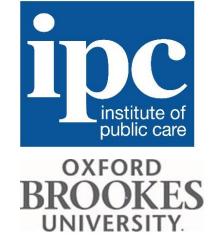# Researching the use of technology in care services

As we use more technology in care services, it is vital that people's information is kept secure, and that the systems we use are very reliable.

This national research programme will look at how care services are using technology, what the risks are, and how services can best be supported to maintain security and good information governance as they use more technology in the future.

Who are we?

The Care Provider Alliance

The Care Provider Alliance is an informal organisation which brings together the national associations for adult social care providers in England. You can read more about the alliance and its members at
www.careprovideralliance.org.uk

The Institute of Public Care

The Institute of Public Care (IPC) a very well respected independent research organisation. It is part of Oxford Brookes University and it has a lot of experience of work with adult care services. You can read more about its work at
https://ipc.brookes.ac.uk

The Local Government Association, the Department of Health and Social Care and NHS Digital are also involved with and support the programme. The programme is funded by the Cabinet Office.

How will the programme work?

The research will take place in three local authority areas, namely North Yorkshire, Central Bedfordshire and Greenwich. A representative group of services will be chosen in each area, and we need around 75 altogether. We are interested in services of all types, sizes and levels of use of technology. We are looking for services that operate services in any of these local authority areas, and this may include some services whose registered office is in a different local authority area.

Each service will receive two visits from IPC, a Discovery Day and a Support Day.

Your Discovery Day

Your Discovery Day will look at what you are currently using technology for, and any plans to increase it. This might include using IT for things like care and support plans, medication records, staff rotas, e-learning and training records etc. IPC will also work with you to begin to assess any current data and cyber security risks.

Your Support Day

How you use your Support Day will depend on your needs. It could be a training day, or help to write an action plan, or supporting you to access further help and guidance, or hands-on work developing policies and guidance. It will depend on what would be most useful for you. You will be able to discuss and agree this with IPC.

After your two days, IPC will write you a short report with recommendations for your particular service, designed to help you as you develop your work in this area. IPC will also be writing reports and recommendations for the sector as a whole, but those reports won't name or identify individual services.

The Care Provider Alliance
Working together for excellence and sustainability in social care

Questions and answers...

What is the timescale?

The research starts in September 2018 and will end by the end of March 2019.

Is the programme supported by the local authority?

Yes, the programme has been discussed in detail with the North Yorkshire, Central Bedfordshire and Greenwich councils, who fully support it, and with the local care associations we know of in the areas.

Is there any funding to cover the costs of taking part?

Yes. You will receive a payment of £2,000 to cover any additional management time or other costs that you may incur.

My service is not very advanced with IT – should we still take part?

Yes absolutely! We know that some services use technology more than others and we are very keen to include the full range. It is important to us that you are open and honest about your use of technology and level of knowledge. If you don't use IT much, don't understand it or have not heard of sector support tools, then that's fine.

Will the report about my service be confidential?

Yes. The report provided by IPC for you will be confidential. The only exception would be in the unlikely event that risks were identified that needed to be raised under adult safeguarding procedures.

What happens next?

There is a short form for you to use to let us know whether you can take part. You can post the form to us using the enclosed replied envelope, or go to www.careprovideralliance.org.uk/cyberproject and download a copy to send by email.

If you are part of a larger organisation, and need the approval of your head office, that is absolutely fine. If you would prefer us to contact your head office directly, let us know.

When we receive your form we will pass your contact details to IPC, and they will be in touch to arrange their work with you. They will talk to you about the practical arrangements for the visit, and about the kind of information they will be asking about during the visit. There may be some things that you will need to ask other colleagues about and, if you need to arrange for other colleagues to be available to talk to IPC too, and that would be fine.

We will also send you a short, informal funding agreement, which we will need you to sign to take part in the programme and receive the funding of £2,000 per service.

Finally, if you don't feel you can agree to take part, we would be very grateful if you could send us a quick email to let us know. Thank you.

Any other questions?

If you have any questions at any stage, please contact cyberproject@rnha.co.uk. You will usually be responded to by the Programme Manager, Peter Cheer; or by Ian Turner, who is the National Chair of the Registered Nursing Home Association.

The Care Provider Alliance
c/o Registered Nursing Home Association
Derek Whittaker House, Tunnel Lane, Birmingham B30 3JN

September 2018

This programme is being led by the Registered Nursing Home Association (RNHA) on behalf of the Care Provider Alliance. For details about how your information will be processed during the programme, please go to www.careprovideralliance.org.uk/cyberproject