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Client story · By Insight UK · Featuring John Bryant (Integration Lead – Social Care, Devon Training Hub; Head of Integration and Development, Torbay Council) and Phil Moore (Digital Innovation Lead – Public Sector, Insight)

Pioneering UK project uses AR technology to slash waiting times in social care settings

A council in Devon has become the UK's first to trial immersive, AR technology to reduce demand on health and care services.

Devon Training Hub, part of the NHS in south-west England, has partnered with Insight Enterprises (NASDAQ:NSIT) – a leading Solutions Integrator – to accelerate its digital journey by supplying caregivers with Microsoft's HoloLens headsets, which combine the real world with the digital world through a transparent visor.

The trial demonstrated two significant ways that the technology could enhance the care that patients either in home care settings or in permanent residential placements could receive. Firstly, if a caregiver suspected a health issue, which they were not trained to assess or diagnose, they were able to instantly connect to a more qualified or experienced member of staff, delivering quick assistance to the patient.

Secondly, the ability to bring registered nurses and clinicians onto a virtual call, via the HoloLens headset, removed the need for on-site visits. This reduced the time to deliver assistance and meant caregivers felt more confident in making decisions remotely.

Demand for social care services has increased significantly over the last few years, largely due to an ageing population. According to recent figures, there were 1,775 people receiving home care support in Torbay last year, with a further 949 in permanent residential placements. Provision of adult social care in the region is delivered by 3,500 people and while the vacancy rate in the region (7.3%) is better than the national average (10.7%), a third (33.8%) of people still choose to leave their jobs each year.

The increased demand, coupled with a skills shortage and the high staff turnover, puts added pressure on services that help get people out of hospital, resulting in delays to discharge, and affecting the number being admitted in the first instance.

What we're doing is looking at technology and asking how can it enable people to perform better, enjoy their work more and provide even better outcomes for patients, clients and staff.

John Bryant, Integration Lead – Social Care at Devon Training Hub, and Head of Integration and Development at Torbay Council

Following the success of the pilot, Insight and south-west partners have developed a network of local champions, providing them with materials, knowledge, skills and confidence to run awareness and end-user training sessions that will expand the use of HoloLens in the region.

To find out more about Insight's healthcare solutions, visit uk.insight.com/healthcare. For more information on Insight, visit uk.insight.com.

