

Transcript of video: The Digital Opportunity - Housing Conference September 2022

Pete Fahy, Director of Adults and Housing, Coventry City Council: The way the White Paper talks about technology really gives the opportunity to bring the technology and housing elements together to support social care to enable people to be independent and achieve good outcomes.

Jeremy Porteus, Director, Housing Improvement Network: How can housing working in partnership with adult social care unlock the opportunities for creating smarter housing, where we are embedding technology from the outset, looking at things like Alexa, and apps, and other forms of social innovation around technology to improve communication and interaction skills, to compress loneliness [and] isolation.

A lot of this technology is already in the marketplace but we need to educate both the workforce but also consumers, so that we all become what I call digital citizens, because at the moment we have more digital exclusion by a lack of understanding, lack of awareness, and we need to be better placed to make informed decisions about how technology can help us, whether it's around the smart meter, or whether it's around how we enable people to track where there's a fall that may trigger a move to a care home, when actually we can support people to live longer and healthier in their own homes.

What we found through TAPPI (technology for ageing population - a panel for innovation) was that there are 10 principles that are very fundamental to how people want to use technology in the home: how to make sure that technology is person-centred, how it was co-produced so that they were involved at the outset in the solutions that were being designed, how it's prescribed and commissioned so it is interoperable.... again that the technology linked up with other technology. What is really exciting now is that in partnership with the TSA as well as funding from the Dunhill Medical Trust, we're now able to test that out in much more depth with test beds across the UK, one of which is Platform Housing Trust in the West Midlands.

Louise Lee, Head of Specialist Housing: I work in the retirement housing department at Platform where we have over 3,000 properties. Part of Platform's strategy is to make better use of technology. We engaged the Tech Services Association to do an audit for us and help us understand what we've got out there and what were the implications around digital switchover.

[There's] so much opportunity but it's just understanding it, assessing it, mapping it, finding the right partners to deliver, and make sure that we invest wisely to maximise the outcomes for Platform Housing and its customers.

Being part of the TAPPI project and all the opportunities that presents to test technology and try and help people overcome their personal challenges, it really complemented our corporate strategy.

We put in a submission which is based around a location in Ledbury in Herefordshire and we're going to focus on personal tech assessments so we have the opportunity to challenge

assumptions. 20% of the customers that are connected to the Internet there, but 50% told us that they aspire to the aspire to, and they aspire to use more technology in their daily lives to help them just, you know, interact and make the most of life and also support their personal health and wellbeing challenges.

The TAPPI 2 project runs from September 22 through to September/October next year, so we're just at the start of that journey, where we are working with all of the TAPPI partners to maximise the learning, test as much technology as possible, and then also share the learning. We're working on new relationships, new partnerships. We've recently started working with Appello we're just piloting, in two sites, their smart living solution.

Tim Barclay, CEO, Appello: The drive to move to a digital telecare environment started when it was announced by Openreach that they will be retiring analogue by 2025 at the latest.

There are circa 2 million or so end customers who rely on analogue telecare that need to be migrated to some type of digital capability over the course of the coming years. There's benefit because you can bring real world improvements to your customers life experience because digital is so much safer and more feature rich than analogue telecare services, and secondly it's compelling to do it sooner rather than later because you will have more choice you will have more flexibility, there is more resource available to you.

There is absolutely a requirement for the housing provider or local authority to have to fund some elements of this transition. There are pots of government and other funding which are available to some extent, but largely this will be a housing provider and local authority led initiative and one of the things that helps justify that investment is the fact that there are new models of care, new models of support that are underpinned by digital technology which analogue text just simply can't do.

Saving just an hour or two hours of care - don care and care costs associated with that mean to pay back is very very quick. So there are lots of models were actually this is not about capital outlay with no return, this is about capital outlay with a clear opportunity to deliver better services more cost effectively.

As a result, it is absolutely clear that those organisations who have a vision to improve their end customers life, their cost of care, and the quality of their care, should use the transition to digital as an enabler of that. This is an opportunity to rethink how you deliver services and do so with more intelligence, delivered with more data available, with better decisions and outcomes being possible.

Claire Aldridge: I'm the strategic contract manager for Millbrook Healthcare and I cover the Essex technology-enabled care contract started in July 2021. It has been commissioned as a four year contract.

Lot one, which Millbrook have been awarded, covers the full installation and decommissioning of the tech, but also a key part of that is the culture change and benefits realisation.

They did a lot of testing before they put the tender out. They did a pilot, they understood how important changing the culture of the prescribers was to embedding tech within the care and support offering.

We work with the prescribers and services in a number of different ways: [we] do the prescriber training, we have clinical OT-led support from within Millbrook that prescribers can tap into, we have a prescriber app, assessment tools, we have a catalogue with details of what the tech does as well as what it is. We meet on a regular basis with digital champions, service users, the tech team within Essex County Council, just to get that feedback.

Benefits realisation is another key part of this contract. We have a benefits realisation tool that's initially completed by the prescribers. The tool asks a series of questions about the tech that's being used [and] why it's being used, and then it generates a score which is all about the savings that can be achieved from that piece of tech. [It] explains how they've got to that figure, so avoiding some dom care, avoidance of res care, and the prescriber can agree with it or say no. And then it gives us that benefits realisation score for that piece of tech, for that person, with that type of condition, that type of need.