DEM-VW study:
Evaluating virtual wards

Information for professionals about an interview study

You are being invited to take part in a research study. This information sheet is designed to explain why the research is being done and what it would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please get in touch with a member of the research team if anything is not clear or you would like more information. **Thank you for reading this.**

If you have any questions, please contact our researcher:

Emily Spencer
Queen Mary, University of London

Telephone: 07502 872 305
Email: emily.spencer@qmul.ac.uk

Why are we doing this research?

As a person with dementia becomes frailer, they are at an increased risk of falls and infections, often resulting in hospital admission. Most people with dementia would prefer to remain at home, which can be enabled through the use of virtual wards. Although such services have been delivered in some areas for many years, services are heterogeneous, with no 'blueprint' to inform optimal care.

It is currently unclear how different models of virtual ward work with and for people with dementia, whether adaptations are required, or if they face barriers to access. Family carers are critical to supporting people with dementia while on a virtual ward, however little is known about how these services can support family carers without increasing carer burden.

The aim of this research is to investigate how virtual wards can best be adapted for people with dementia, as well as the family carers involved in supporting them to stay at home. Using the findings from this study, we hope to develop policy and practice recommendations for virtual wards caring for people with dementia.

Why have you been invited?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you are a health or care professional involved in caring for people with dementia as part of a virtual ward. Your local virtual ward is participating in this study.

What are we asking you to do?

If you decide to participate:

- **You will be invited to take part in an interview**. The interview can be in person, by video call, or by phone depending on your preference. You will be asked about your experience of supporting people with dementia on a virtual ward. This will include barriers and facilitators to delivering virtual wards to these individuals, existing adaptations, and how virtual wards could be further developed to best meet the needs of people with dementia and family carers.
- The interview will last **up to one hour**. You will be able to take a break or stop completely at any time. With your permission, **the interview will be audio recorded**. The recording will be transcribed by a professional transcription service, after which it will be deleted. Any identifiable information, e.g. names or places, will be removed from the transcript.
- We hope to use this information to develop **policy and practice recommendations** on how virtual wards can work best for all people with dementia and their family carers.
- We will ask you to **complete a short demographic questionnaire**. This will take no more than five minutes.
- **All of your information, including audio recordings, will be stored securely and confidentially.**

What are the benefits of taking part?

Your involvement in this study will help us to understand how virtual wards can best be adapted to support people with dementia and their family carers. This will help us to develop policy and practice recommendations for the delivery of virtual wards for these individuals. We hope that this will lead to improved care.

What are the risks of taking part?

There are no known risks to taking part. However, if for any reason you want to stop taking part in the study you can.

Do you have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you choose to take part, you can withdraw from the study without giving a reason. If you choose to withdraw within 6 weeks of the interview, we will delete the recording and any other information that we have about you. After 6 weeks, we will start to analyse the recording.

After the interview study, a group of people with dementia, family carers and health and care professionals will help us develop policy and practice recommendations on running virtual wards for people with dementia. You can tell us whether you would be interested in participating in this phase of the study.

Will information be kept confidential?

All your information will be kept in a secure location at Queen Mary, University of London. Electronic data, including audio recordings, will be stored on an access-controlled, encrypted network. Paper documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Information that could identify you, or anyone you talk about, will be removed from the interview transcript.

To make research easier, we would like to keep the interview transcript and other information that we collect from you for other researchers to access in the future. This means the data would be stored securely by the university, and researchers may apply to use it for future ethically approved studies. Things that could identify you or your patients, like names or locations, will be removed from transcripts. You will have the option to say no to your information being used in future research. You can still take part in the study if you say no.

Confidentiality will be subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines. This means that anything you share will be treated as confidential, unless you tell us (or we observe) something that suggests malpractice by staff, risk of harm to service users, a potential criminal offence, or serious concerns about someone's health and wellbeing.

How will researchers use information about you?

We will use information you give us, as well as the audio recording and transcript of your interview, to complete this research project. The information we hold will include your name and contact details, however members of the research team who do not need to know who you are will not have access to your personal information. A university-approved transcription company will listen to the audio recording of the interview to produce a transcript. They will not have access to other information about you. After the transcript has been checked for accuracy, the audio recording will be deleted.

Once the research is completed, we will keep some of the data so that we can check the findings. The findings will be written up in scientific journals and presented at professional conferences. We will not include any identifiable information in our reports.

We will send you a copy of the findings when the study has finished if you would like this.

If you would like more information about how we use your personal data and what your rights are under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), please ask a member of the research team or email data-protection@qmul.ac.uk.

Your data will not be shared outside of the UK.

The data custodian for this study is Professor Nathan Davies.

Who is organising and funding this study?

This research is funded by the Alzheimer's Society (project grant 667). The study is being led by Professor Nathan Davies. Queen Mary, University of London are the sponsor for the study.

Has the research been reviewed by an appropriate research ethics committee?

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the NHS Research Ethics Committee Wales REC7.

What if there is a problem?

If you have any concerns about any aspects of this research, please contact the principal investigator, Professor Nathan Davies.

Email: n.davies@qmul.ac.uk

What happens now?

You can get in touch with the lead researcher to say whether or not you would like to take part, or to ask for more information:

Researcher: Emily Spencer
Email: emily.spencer@qmul.ac.uk
Telephone: 07502 872 305

Thank you for taking the time to read this.