

Integration in Action

Housing services within
GP practices & hospitals

**AgeUK Warwickshire Housing
Information & Advice**



This brochure summarises key findings from the [independent evaluation](#) of a Warwickshire GP linked initiative, including the cost savings to the NHS, Social Care and benefits to older patients.

Outcomes include:

- Reduced health risks/GP visits
- Prevention of hospital admission/readmission eg reduced falls risk
- Delayed admission to residential care
- Extended independent living
- Improved well-being
- For every £1 spent on the service health and social care saved £17.50

The NHS England view of housing

The *'Next Steps in the NHS Five Year Forward View'* highlights the importance of keeping people healthier for longer, improving care, reducing health inequalities and working jointly across professional boundaries, including housing.

NHS England (NHSE) is signed up to a national *Memorandum of Understanding* as a commitment to support joint action across housing, health and care.

NHSE's CCG Engagement Programme has published a *'Quick Guide to Health and Housing'* and its housing programme focuses on three key elements:

1. How housing can help prevent people from being admitted to hospital;
2. How housing can help people be discharged from hospital; and
3. How housing can support people to remain independent in the community.

This brochure outlines how an evaluated local service is delivering to achieve these outcomes.

Why housing?

Where people live, the physical quality, suitability and stability of their home, has a significant impact on their health, and hence on demand for NHS (as well as social care) services¹.

There are direct quantifiable costs to the NHS of housing disrepair, with resulting annual first year treatment costs to the NHS in excess of £1.4bn.

In addition, a forward looking view of the NHS which envisages not only prevention but also more health care delivered at or closer to home, will only be achievable if patients live in decent homes where such care can be provided effectively.

Health & Housing Links

- Many of the most common chronic health conditions have a causal link to or are exacerbated by poor housing. These include heart disease, stroke, respiratory conditions, mental health problems, arthritis and rheumatism.
- Older people are more prone to falls, most of which occur at home, with falls risk level linked to home hazards.
- 2 million older households living in non-decent homes, 78% in owner occupied sector.

A local solution

Housing & Care Options for older people in Warwickshire

AgeUK Warwickshire (AUKW) working with the national EAC FirstStop programme delivered a health sector linked *'Housing and Care Options in Later Life'* information, advice and practical help service for older people.

It was part of a ground breaking GP Care Navigator Pilot, pro-actively visiting older people identified by their GP as being at higher risk, undertaking holistic assessments, and offering interventions to reduce risk. Housing solutions emerged as particularly cost effective and highly valued by patients.

¹ Nicol S, Roys M, & Garrett H (2015) *Briefing paper: The cost of poor housing to the NHS* Building Research Establishment

Case study: Mr Brown

Mr Brown, 67yrs, has Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, a rare, degenerative condition. He lived alone in a small, unsuitable flat with internal steps in a high rise block and had had in excess of 40 falls in a year.

He didn't want to move, said he wanted to remain as independent as he could for as long as possible. The housing options advisor became involved, built up trust and eventually took Mr Brown to visit an extra care housing scheme. She managed to locate Mr Brown's estranged brother, who is now a great help and support, taking Mr Brown to his many medical appointments, shopping etc. With the support of the housing options adviser, Mr Brown agreed to move to a safe, warm, wheelchair accessible, extra care flat with daily care visits.

He now has the space to use a walking frame to get around more safely – he was unable to use a walking aid in his old flat because it was too small and uneven. He has a wet room for bathing and additional grab rails have been installed.

As his condition deteriorates and his care needs increase, the extra care scheme will be able to provide this, extending his independence and reducing risk of emergency hospital admissions.



SAVINGS IN ONE YEAR

Reduced risk of fall with hip fracture	£ 3,577
Reduced risk of unplanned hospital admission	£ 2,837
Reduced care costs* (avoidance of residential care)	£20,176
TOTAL FIRST YEAR SAVINGS	£26,590

(£25,636pa minus care support at home @ £5,460pa)

“ If it hadn't been for Gill I would never have moved. I just didn't see the point in anything, even though I'd fallen about 40 times and I didn't eat properly, but I can now see the benefits.”*

Comment from Mr Brown

**name changed - the local Housing Options adviser*

The Impact

Through provision of impartial information, advice and practical help, the Housing Options service run by AgeUK Warwickshire enabled older people to either modify their current home, or move to a more suitable home.

OUTPUTS

Over the 18 month pilot programme, a single, part time housing options adviser assisted:

- 163 older people who needed more intensive help/casework level support e.g. to move home (Level 3)
- 117 older people who needed information and advice to reach a decision (Level 2)
- 1,358 older people who received basic housing & care information via surgeries, outreach events & talks (some undertaken by other AUKW staff) leaving people better able to plan ahead (Level 1).

NOTE: *The evaluation only quantified the benefits of Level 3 cases during a 12 month period*

OUTCOMES

- Improved long term conditions management & reduced GP visits - 22% of cases
- Falls risk reduction - 33% of cases
- Improved well-being - through reduced social isolation (24%), access to support (53%)
- Reduced risk of premature admission to residential care (reported in 4% of cases).

COST BENEFITS

The first 12 months' cost saving to health and social care (Level 3 cases only) was **£337,804***, compared with a service operating cost of **£19,346**.

The cost benefits from just one of the sampled case studies more than covered the cost of the adviser.

For every £1 spent on the Housing and Care Options Advice service, health and social care saved £17.50 - a cost benefit ratio of 1: 17.5.



*These are potentially cumulative annual savings ie. when the outcome of a home move/alteration is to reduce the risk of falls/hospitalisation/enable independent living without care/prevent admission to residential care, then for each year that the older person continues to live in this improved situation the potential savings increase.

About Care & Repair England

Care & Repair England (Charitable Society Reg. No. 25121R) aims to improve older people's housing. It innovates, develops, promotes and supports practical housing initiatives & related policy and practice which enable older people to live independently in their own homes for as long as they choose.

info@careandrepair-england.org.uk

www.careandrepair-england.org.uk

Care & Repair England
The Renewal Trust Business Centre
3 Hawksworth Street
Nottingham NG3 2EG
Tel: 0115 9506500

Age UK Warwickshire

info@ageukwarks.org.uk
www.ageuk.org.uk/warwickshire

Age UK Warwickshire
8 Clemens Street
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire CV31 2DL
Tel: 01926 458 100

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