

Social Care Innovation Programme (SCIP) – Phase 1 Scoping exercise

Who are we?

We are the Social Care Innovation Programme (SCIP)! Our purpose is to address the challenges faced by social care providers through the use of smart technologies. In collaboration with the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC), we received part funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Northern Powerhouse to support a £1.5 Million project to drive innovation, enhance quality and increase sustainability in the social care sector.

What did we do?

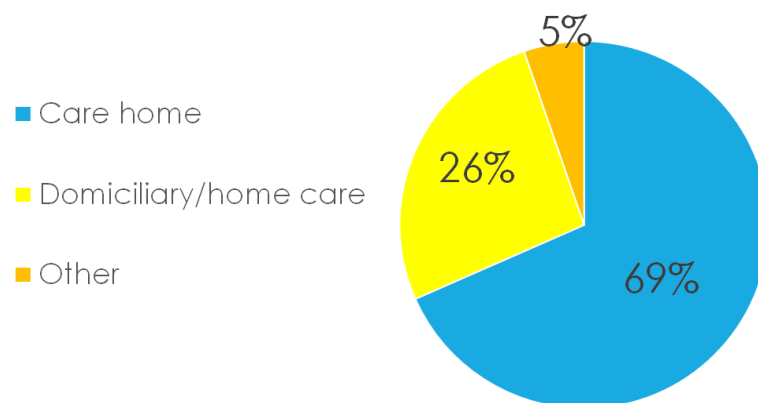
In order to find out how technology may help social care providers, we invited Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to complete a survey on:

1. the types of technology that are currently available in their work setting and
2. identify any technology gaps that SMEs feel may help enhance the quality of care they provide to residents or service users.

SME's that were eligible to take part were care homes, domiciliary care providers, day care centres and charity organisations that provide care and support to service users living in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

What did we find?

99 SME's completed the survey, of which 69% were care homes, 26% were domiciliary care providers, and 5% were made up of other organisations such as day care services, voluntary organisations, supported living and respite care.



Wi-Fi signal

Most SMEs appear to have Wi-Fi installed, however problems were reported in terms of Wi-Fi signal strength and 4/5G access, particularly for larger care homes over multiple floors, or domiciliary care providers covering wide spans of the East Riding of Yorkshire. This makes communication and electronic completion of paperwork difficult.



Medication management



SMEs were strongly interested in medication management, such as e-prescribing/eMAR and electronic medication reminders & dispensers. Common problems reported included medication errors and delays in administration due to not having access to online medication systems.



Overcoming communication barriers

SMEs also showed an interest in technology that can help overcome communication barriers with service users, (e.g. text-to-speech, sign language, translation apps) although couldn't identify a specific product that does this.

Improving quality of life for service users

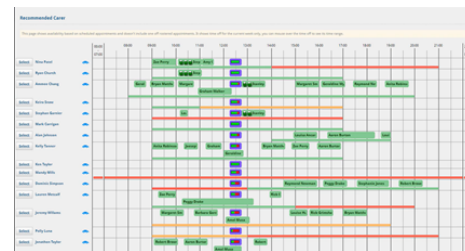
There was also a shared interest in technology that could potentially improve the quality of life and wellbeing for service users, such as cognitive stimulation and sensory tools (e.g. 'magic' tables and sensory lights), orientation technology (e.g. electronic calendars and reminders) or for entertainment such as smart speakers and console/electronic games.



However domiciliary care providers commented that service users usually buy these products themselves, and showed more interest in improving organisational systems and IT infrastructure.

Organisational tools

Care homes showed a particular interest in access to software such as e-rostering, electronic note taking and care planning.



Personal and environmental safety

Care homes also showed interest in video surveillance, door detectors, nurse call alarms/systems as well as other types of detectors such as seizure, enuresis and flood detectors. This technology would help improve the safety and wellbeing of residents but also improve staff efficiency.



Access to hardware

Domiciliary care providers on the other hand were interested in having access to more hardware, such as tablets, laptops or smartphones in order to complete remote e-learning training, team meetings or complete care plans / notes electronically.





What's next?

Using the survey findings, we are working with eligible SMEs to identify and source technologies that will enable them to develop new services, enhance the quality of care, increase productivity and sustainability, and improve the quality of life of those for whom they provide care, and indeed of the staff who provide support. SMEs will then have the opportunity to apply for innovation grant funding from SCIP to support the procurement and implementation of technologies and products. ERYC and the University of Hull will provide support to SMEs which have been successful in their application for funding, to implement and evaluate the new technology in their workplace.

For further information about the project or to register your interest in a SME care provider grant please contact the East Riding of Yorkshire Council at:

SCIP@eastriding.gov.uk

If you are a digital technology company that would like to discuss how your innovative technology can or could support care providers, please forward some detail about your company and your digital technology to the University of Hull SCIP Research Team: SCIP@hull.ac.uk