Adult Care Homes in South East Scotland being asked to look out for the LADDeR study

Building on our previous work on care home information and data collection, Edinburgh Napier University's School of Health and Social Care and School of Computing have partnered with the Advanced Care Research Centre at the University of Edinburgh to carry out a critical review – to establish a map of the ways information about residents is collected by Scottish care homes.

Care home data is collected by a range of different systems that vary home to home and we know that some care homes record information on paper. We need to understand this better and improve the efficiency of access to data for those looking to meet the needs of residents, and monitor and develop services, as starkly exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. By getting a complete picture of how Care Homes collect information, we can inform future digital approaches and more effective information sharing to support care home residents.

The study is called LADDer (Landscape Assessment of Data and Digital Readiness of Scottish Care Homes) and we hope that all adult care homes in South East Scotland will provide details about their digital connectivity, the systems they use to collect and store resident data, and how this information is shared with other healthcare partners.

The study, led by Senior Research Fellow Lucy Johnston from the School of Health and Social Care and Associate Professor Alistair Lawson from the School of Computing, supports the aims of the Digital Approaches in Care Homes Action Plan . The results will inform the development of a national data platform for care homes and improve information use and sharing. We will use the information care homes provide to create a picture of how far up the ladder of electronic data collection and digital connection our care homes are.

During November all 250 adult care homes in Edinburgh and the Lothians, Fife, and the Scottish Borders will be asked to tell us about how they collect information about their residents and how good…or bad their internet connection is! Care homes in South East Scotland should look out for the emailed invitation and make sure their home is included. It takes less than ten minutes to complete.

Lucy Johnston said

In order to achieve as accurate a picture as possible, the contribution of every care home in the region is highly important and we hope that every care home will respond. This information is needed to support the development of strong digital foundations for Scottish care homes, inform priorities for record sharing and ways to reduce the time care homes spend providing information to care partners, policy makers and researchers!

The cross-school research team includes Dr Lynda Anderson from the School of Health and Social Care, and Dr Paul Lapok and Heidi Koikkalainen from the School of Computing. The study is funded by the Data-Driven Innovation Programme.

For further information see our project page LADDeR or email l.johnston@napier.ac.uk