Media information
For immediate use

Telehealth is taking off in South Ayrshire
Self-management week 28 September – 2 October 2015

Patients in South Ayrshire are continuing to reap the benefits of telehealth home health monitoring as the use of the technology continues to grow.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran began its telehealth programme in 2011. Telehealth allows patients with long-term conditions such as Chronic Heart Failure (CHF), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Diabetes to monitor and self-manage their condition at home, reducing the need to be admitted into hospital.

Patients have a small touch screen device, called a pod (similar to a tablet or smartphone), that asks them simple questions about how they feel. It can also take vital signs information such as blood pressure, oxygen saturation and weight, and contains the patient’s individual self-management plan.

Patients are then able to self-manage their condition according to their results - for example, if a patient’s blood pressure is slightly elevated, the test alerts them to take extra medication.

The results are also uploaded for review by advanced nurse practitioners and specialist nurses based at the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) Service in Biggart Hospital. The TEC service brings together clinicians throughout the day to remotely review their patients’ test results. If results are found to be concerning, the team make contact with the patient and arrange for the appropriate support or care to be provided.
One patient who has benefited from Telehealth is Mr Allan Hunter from Girvan in South Ayrshire.

Mr Hunter was diagnosed with COPD and before using telehealth, he had to go to hospital two to three times a month due to his condition. Mr Hunter was referred for the telehealth service within South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership at Girvan Community Hospital to help him to monitor and manage his condition.

Mr Hunter said: “The home pod has been absolutely brilliant. There is a feel good factor with it - when I can see that my blood pressure is good every day that makes me feel better.

“If I am feeling bad or the questions on the pod are not correct I know that I will get a phone call which cuts down on visits to the hospital. I only go into hospital now for my yearly check up.

“I would recommend this to anybody. It is so easy to use and it gives you piece of mind knowing the nurses are only ever a phone call away.”

To find out more about self-management of conditions, visit Living it Up at https://portal.livingitup.org.uk/. Living it Up is an award winning self-management hub which empowers people aged 50 and over to use technology to manage their health and wellbeing and to be better connected to their communities.

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Date of release: 25 September 2015

Photograph: 240915telehealthSA(5): Mr Allan Hunter of Girvan pictured using his home pod.

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