

25<sup>th</sup> January 2022

## Health Technology Wales launches search for ideas that could transform social care

Health Technology Wales has embarked on a search for technology with the potential to transform Wales' social sector.

It has launched a social care open topic call requesting that technologies and models of care and support that offer benefits to those who use social care are referred to them for assessment.

Health Technology Wales, which appraises evidence and produces national guidance to inform the adoption of technologies within Welsh Care Systems, is inviting people accessing social care, social care professionals, researchers, technology developers and members of the public to submit their ideas by February 25<sup>th</sup> 2022.

These ideas could include support programmes, devices, therapies and any other technologies or models of care and support that could improve the lives of those accessing social care in Wales.

HTW's team of researchers will assess the evidence available on the social care topics submitted and a decision will be made on whether there is sufficient evidence to publish guidance that may support adoption of the technology for use in Wales.

Chief Social Care Officer for Wales, Albert Heaney, said:

“Social care is a vital part of our community and makes a big difference to people's lives all across Wales. People who have experienced the care system first-hand are often best placed to think of innovative ways we can improve support for carers, the people being cared for and their families. I encourage anyone with an idea on how we can transform social care to submit their ideas and help us continue to make people receiving social care to feel respected and valued as the individual that they are.”

A recent example of a social care topic that HTW has provided guidance on is [START](#) – an eight-week psychological support programme for carers of people with dementia which has been shown to reduce levels of depression and anxiety. HTW's guidance concluded that the available evidence supported the adoption of the START programme in Wales, noting that it should be available to carers of those with dementia.

Susan Myles, Director of Health Technology Wales, explained why the organisation is so keen to continue researching ways to support the social care sector in Wales.

“Millions of people across Wales rely on the social care sector to support them and their families – from older people, people with disabilities and looked after children and young people. As an organisation we can use our expertise to support the social care sector to adopt the technologies that offer the most benefit and the best possible care for the people of Wales.

“Anybody can submit a topic to Health Technology Wales. They don't need to be an expert in the field. We very much welcome submissions from those accessing social care support and their families.”

Sue Evans, Chief Executive of Social Care Wales, added:

“Using the best evidence to inform how we deliver care and support is essential to make sure we deliver the best outcomes for citizens. We’re delighted to be working together with Health Technology Wales, who bring a wealth of skills and experience to evaluating and appraising new and different ways of working and new technology. They are uniquely placed to support social care in Wales.”

Health Technology Wales’ remit covers non-medicine health and social care technologies which can include support programmes, devices, diagnostic tests, psychological therapies and changes in support pathways.

Professor Peter Groves, Chairman of Health Technology Wales, said:

“It is important that Health Technology Wales does all it can to ensure that those who access social care services in Wales are provided with support that, evidence tells us, is the most effective and represents the best use of resources. In order to discharge this responsibility, it is important that HTW are made aware of what the best options and opportunities might be. We therefore call on all of those who use or deliver social care services to consider if there are new or under-utilised approaches that they are aware of which may deliver a step change improvement in the delivery of care. If there are please let us know and use this topic call as an opportunity to engage with us in the interest of improving the lives of people across Wales.”

To submit a topic to the social care open topic call please fill in a simple [submission form](#) by February 25<sup>th</sup> 2022. The HTW team would be happy to support you to refer a social care technology. Get in touch by emailing [Health.TechnologyWales@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Health.TechnologyWales@wales.nhs.uk).

**Notes:**

- HTW was established by ministerial recommendation in 2017 to support a strategic, national approach to the identification, appraisal and adoption of new technologies into health and care settings.
- HTW is funded by Welsh Government and hosted within NHS Wales (Velindre University NHS Trust) but is independent of both. It assesses non-medicine health technologies for use in health and care settings in Wales in collaboration with partners across the health, social care and technology sectors. HTW’s work informs commissioning by NHS Wales and care providers and supports decision makers to make evidence informed decisions on both technology investments and disinvestments.

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