

Clinical Homecare: Powering the 10 Year Health Plan

Reducing the burden on acute hospital services and treating people at home in a coastal urban area with higher deprivation

Analysis from the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), published in their new report, *Bringing healthcare home: A blueprint for collaborative clinical homecare*, quantifies the health outcomes of homecare for the first time. Read the ABPI's full report [here](#).

Context

Medway Maritime Hospital is a 550-bed district general hospital located in Gillingham, serving a population of approximately 430,000 across Medway and Swale, on the North Kent coast. It sits in a densely populated urban area with significant health inequalities. According to Medway Council in 2019, the area contains 37 neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived nationally, and 14 neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10%. This makes equitable, community-based models of care particularly urgent and impactful.

The challenge

People with some long-term conditions will often need regular trips to hospital to collect medicine or to receive treatment. This added travel burden, wait times, and risk of infection can be a significant challenge for patients - particularly for those who are clinically vulnerable, live a long way from hospital or have limited free time due to family or work commitments.

The approach

Medway's pharmacy department manages the clinical homecare services for over 3,200 patients across a range of different therapy areas. It is nationally a high user of homecare compared to the number of beds in the organisation. Homecare is being used to treat nine different speciality areas in Medway. The majority of people receiving homecare are having treatment for rheumatology, and an increasing number of people also receiving at-home treatment for cancer.

Medway's homecare team is pharmacy technician-led, working with pharmacists in their speciality areas and administrative support. The team works closely with pharmaceutical manufacturers who provide the medicine, and specialist homecare organisations who provide the service.

Stephen Cook, Chief Pharmacist at Medway Maritime NHS Foundation Trust says:

“Within Medway, we have chosen to offer our patients Clinical Homecare as an option to improve their overall experience. Historically, our patients would need to attend the pharmacy following their consultation to collect their medicines, with the additional waiting time commonly associated with a busy department.

Homecare provides the opportunity for patients to plan their treatment around their lives. Anecdotal feedback from our patients has been positive, and whilst the primary driver remains improved patient experience and outcomes, it is also a more cost-effective option for the Trust.”

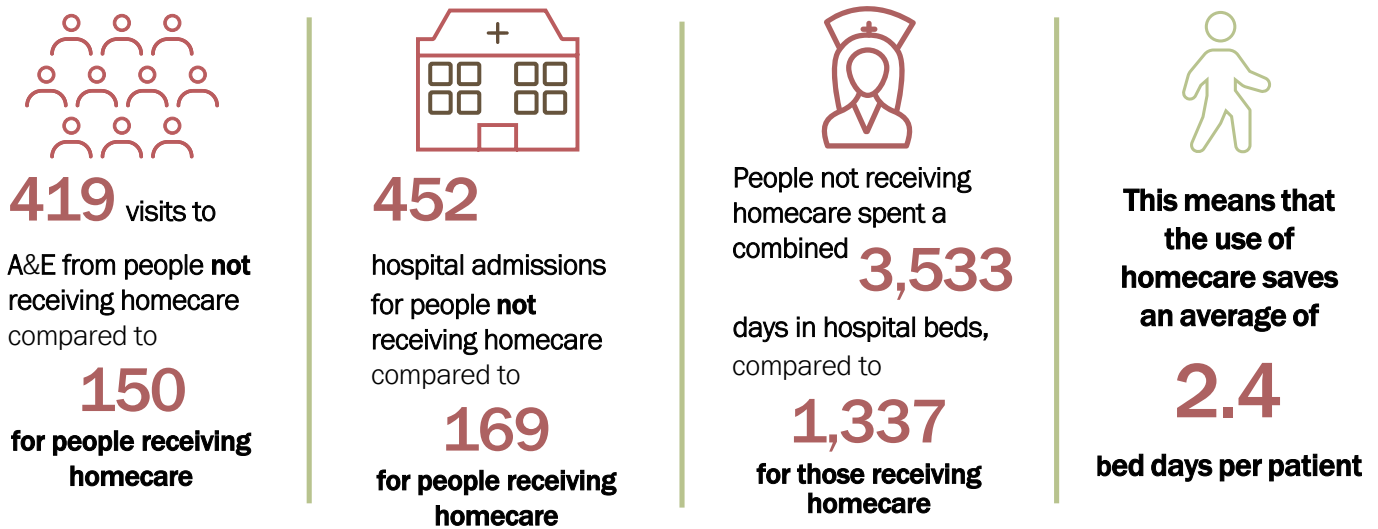
Delivering the ambitions of the 10 Year Health Plan

Helping people manage long-term conditions safely at home in a high-need area

In Medway, clinical homecare is enabling patients to manage their long-term conditions safely from home, supporting better continuity of care and reducing the need for hospital visits. It helps people to stay well in the community and maintain independence, which is especially valuable in areas with high deprivation and poorer access to transport.

Analysis compared the health outcomes of those receiving clinical homecare from Medway Maritime hospital with the health outcomes of similar patients in the wider Kent area (supported by the ICB).

Across six months, this data showed:



At Medway, the homecare model is reducing pressures on acute services and helping people with long-term and chronic conditions to stay well and in the community. This aligns with the ambitions of the 10 Year Health Plan and the Government's hospital to community shift.

Stephen Cook, Chief Pharmacist at Medway Maritime NHS Foundation Trust says:

“Clinical Homecare is one of the best kept secrets in the NHS. We have long understood the benefits it brings to patient experience and system efficiency — what we’re now seeing is that it may also be improving health outcomes and reducing hospital demand. That’s transformative.”