



# Remote Support for Patients with Multimorbidity

Finland | Ireland | Sweden | Scotland | Northern Ireland

## Overview

Based on previous experience of home-based services for patients with complex care requirements, this project takes different forms in different countries:

- In Ireland, a self-monitoring station is based within a GP clinic where patients can check their blood pressure and weight and use exercise equipment.
- In Sweden, clinic-based blood pressure self-monitoring services were implemented, in addition to a second service: a "check-up bag" that nurses use on home visits to evaluate blood pressure and calculate the INR blood clotting measure.
- In Finland's Oulu Arc Subregion, patients use a web portal to access laboratory results, monitor their health and contact healthcare staff with any questions, plus housebound patients with social and health care needs were offered a VC care option.

## Key points

Options for self-care can help patients learn more about their health and take responsibility, with support and encouragement from clinicians.

## Benefits

- Patients have peace of mind that their condition is being monitored
- Patients gain greater understanding of their condition and how to manage it
- Less risk of unplanned admissions to hospital
- Reduced anxiety for carers and family

Elderly people are willing to live at home as long as possible but social isolation can cause loneliness and also lead to various problems with physical, mental and social wellbeing. VC technology enables participation in both clinical appointments and social activities, including engaging with distant friends and relatives.



In Northern Ireland, health and social care trusts are providing a telemonitoring service to people who have been diagnosed with conditions such as diabetes, heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and after stroke/transient ischemic attack (TIA). TelemonitoringNI involves remotely monitoring patients who are not at the same location as the health care provider – a patient has a number of monitoring devices at home and the results are sent via telephone to the health care provider. It is a convenient way for patients to avoid travel and to perform some of the more basic work of healthcare for themselves.

In northern Sweden, a drop-in service for self-measuring of blood pressure and INR values is now available at healthcare centres in Malå (since November 2012), Sorsele (since January 2013) and Storuman. To date, over 500 patients have used this new service.

Self-measuring technology such as the Check-up Bag delivers direct results; it is not necessary to send samples to a hospital laboratory and wait 24-48 hours for results.

ITTS Ireland have developed a 'health portal' to encourage active engagement with exercise within a safe environment. Participants are educated on the benefits of exercise, how to use health monitoring equipment and encouraged to monitor their own personal health statistics prior to, or directly after, a visit with their GP. By having the portal within a primary care setting, participants have confidence to simply have a go, knowing that clinical support is nearby if they feel that they need attention.

In Finland, Oulunkaari Self Care portal is another tool which can be used as a database for patients' self-measurement results (e.g., INR) and other health care information.

“ I think it's an advantage that I can come in and get some of the fundamentals done myself without having to make an appointment with the doctor and using up the doctor's time. *Health portal user, Ireland* ”

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