

What was the issue?

- With an ageing population, more people are living longer with a number of health conditions. Care homes have not previously managed patients with such complex needs and we identified a skills and confidence gap with staff.
- Calling an ambulance is often the first response when a resident's health deteriorates.
- Repeated hospital visits and short stays in hospital were disorientating for residents and difficult for care staff to manage.
- It was difficult to retain care home staff as they were not being upskilled or recognised for the level of work they were carrying out.

Benefits

- Improved preventative measures and enjoyable activities mean that residents enjoy better health and wellbeing.
- Care home staff have more confidence to support residents when they become unwell, reducing short-term admissions to hospital.
- Staff feel more valued, thanks to the additional training.

Key facts

- **20** residential homes involved
- **213** champions trained
- **75%** of people in residential homes said that activities within the home had improved following the training
- **45%** reduction in A&E attendances
- **90% decrease** in pressure sores
- **24% decrease** in MUST scores

MUST is a screening tool to identify adults who are malnourished or at risk of malnutrition and includes guidelines which can be used to develop a care plan.

How did we tackle the problem?

The Vanguard project and 'Better Care Fund' paid for a 10-month training and support programme for care home staff.

'Advanced Champions' are trained in one of six topics: dementia; nutrition; engagement; falls; wound management and health (including end of life, respiratory, neurological and continence care); engagement and wellbeing.

Training improves the specialist knowledge of champions as well as giving them the skills to train, coach and mentor so they can cascade their knowledge to other colleagues.

On average, 25% of local authority-funded residents are deemed to have a higher level of need, and therefore a 'premium' is paid to these 'Complex Care' homes where higher needs for support are recognised. Homes also received backfill money to support them while their champion was training.

Case study

Jacqueline Costantini has been a senior care worker at Burleigh House care home for five years and recently completed training in general health and falls prevention.



“ I thought I was too old to learn anything new,” she said.

“But I have learned so much and it has made me feel so much better about myself as well as helping me to care for our residents better.

“I've also learned to mentor others. I did lots and lots of training, and it was hard. We had a lot of homework which I had to do alongside the job, but it has definitely been worth it.”

Find out more

www.enhertsvanguard.uk/showcase