



Sirona Care and health CIC covering: Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire - Insulin delegation pilot in Weston Super Mare.



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www.sirona-cic.org.uk

Introduction

Sirona is a not-for-profit social enterprise commissioned by the NHS and local authorities. Employing their own registered nurses and delivering community services across Bristol, North Somerset, and South Gloucestershire.

Within North Somerset, Weston Super Mare has a very high concentration of care homes. Sirona were experiencing the challenges below and therefore embarked on an insulin delegation pilot in June 2023.

- Resident experience feedback: the insulin is delivered when the community nurse is available which is not necessarily the time that best suits the care home resident.
- Care home experience feedback: the care home has to manage multiple attendances by clinical staff to deliver insulin to residents.
- Clinical capacity: significant clinical capacity is taken up traveling to care homes and delivering insulin.

Sirona have spent the last six months (June – December 2023) working with care homes to develop a programme to delegate insulin delivery to appropriately trained senior care home staff. This has been supported by primary care, local authority brokerage and the integrated care board (ICB). A number of settings expressed an interest in participating in this work and initially the focus was on two care homes where training started in January 2024.

The benefits of this approach

- **Better outcomes** – Delegation of insulin with certain insulin regimens (individualised treatments for people with diabetes), means that mealtimes and insulin administration is timelier. In doing so they improve the management of blood glucose levels and reduce the risk of hypoglycaemia (low blood glucose levels). It is also anticipated that the programme could reduce and support people with diabetes to maximise their diabetes related health outcomes, leading to potential reduction in diabetes related complications.
- **Better experience** – Improved management and improved timely intervention by the care worker within the care home setting can result in more time for people living with diabetes to undertake other activities, improving their quality of life. This approach to personalised care has reduced the risk of complications of diabetes for these individuals, as well as improving their health and wellbeing.
- **Better use of resources** – The insulin delegation programme offers a way of supporting social care workforce development and normalises parity of esteem by providing skill and competency development, supported by robust governance infrastructure. Non-registered practitioners can administer diabetes care, including insulin, while still under the supervision of a community registered nurse, ensuring patient safety and quality of care for the patient with diabetes. As well as ensuring the most effective use of the community nurse capacity across the pathway. This is improving relationships between care homes and community staff.

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Finances and capacity

While there is no payment involved, the care home staff are taking on the role as it works better for them. Sirona care and health provide the support, competency sign off and clinical oversight. It is anticipated that the time invested by Sirona staff in delivering training will ultimately reduce the number of community nursing visits required. There is no additional payment offered to care workers however it is anticipated that the development of these additional skills will improve job satisfaction and progression. The hope is that specific care homes will become centres of excellence which is likely to increase the sustainability of specific care homes.

There are things Sirona have identified that others should consider before taking on these responsibilities:

- **Insurance** - The care home must have appropriate insurance to be able to be involved, including vicarious liability.
- **Capacity in care homes, including skills** – the care homes must have the staffing to support the initiative with the appropriate level of skills. Job roles are different and therefore the job descriptions and competencies of all staff are reviewed and assessed to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements.
- **Sign off procedures** - Competency sign off is time consuming for the clinical teams, however the benefits significantly outweigh the challenge. Staff competencies need to be signed off ten times before they are given full competency sign-off. During the first month of commencement of insulin delegation, residents receive weekly face to face reviews by the senior community nurse - or their delegate – responsible for their care with the care home manager. Reviews are stepped down to twice weekly, three times a week, then monthly when the senior nurse/ delegate and care home manager are satisfied with third party administration of insulin by care home staff.

Sirona acknowledge that they will probably find further challenges as they move to implementation and roll out, however, a group has been set up to address these challenges as they arise. They also recognise the potential for further delegation of interventions to residential care homes in the future e.g. bloods/Phlebotomy.

Plan for the future

Sirona plan to evaluate the data and impact and learn from the experiences of those receiving the care, the enhanced worker delivering the care, the care home and their staff.

To roll out the delegated insulin model across other Sirona services such as domiciliary care and extra care housing.

Support from government organisations

Sirona have identified several ways that support could be improved by bodies overseeing the implementation of delegated healthcare activities. Including:

- support for care homes to manage the corporate governance e.g. an Information Governance Assurance toolkit and guidelines regarding insurance
- an acknowledgement of both health and social care when developing long term condition management pathways/services, especially when considering the ageing well agenda
- the importance of collaborating with key stakeholders at planning stage
- improved equal access for health and social care providers to education platforms and digital access i.e. NHS emails, and being able to share patient information easily.

Find out more about delegated healthcare activities

Visit: www.skillsforcare.org.uk/DelegatedHealthcareActivities

