Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Staff – Virtual Visiting

Introduction:

The majority of people coming into hospital will have their own phone or tablet to maintain contact with the people who matter most and we ask that, where possible, staff look at ways to reunite patients with their own hand held devices. However, there will be those who do not have access to this technology and are therefore more likely to be vulnerable to isolation and not being able to access support from those that matter to them. To help those families stay connected NHS Grampian now offer Virtual Visiting which includes access to a shared NHS Grampian iPad to make video calls.

To make easier reading, for the remainder of this document, we have referred to the people who matter most; friends, family or carers as 'family'.

Staff are asked to look to the person-centred principles of Welcome Ward when supporting virtual connections – taking a flexible approach to meet the needs of each individual.

The information in this SOP is designed to accompany the documents listed below (available on the Covid-19 section of the NHSG website) and applies during the Covid-19 outbreak. It will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis, and revised once the outbreak is over. Please make sure you have taken time to read through before supporting patients to access Virtual Visiting for the first time:

- NHS Grampian Virtual Visiting Information Guide
- Decontamination Guidance
- Staff Guidance for FaceTime / Skype
- Welcome Ward Information Leaflet

I've Just Received a Virtual Visiting iPad for my Area What Should I Do?

On receipt of the Virtual Visiting iPad for your area please:

- Identify a safe, secure and clean place for storage.
- Ensure you have a supply of 70% isopropyl alcohol wipes and Clorox disinfecting wipes available for decontamination.
- Identify ward staff, familiar with making calls through Skype and FaceTime on an iPad, to support patients to safely use the iPad to video call family members and also complete an anonymous evaluation looking at their experience of Virtual Visiting. As well as letting the Virtual Visiting team know if the project is working well, completion rates of the survey will help determine the number of users in an area.
- Identify a staff member to link with a member of the Virtual Visiting Team once a week to provide vital staff feedback on what works well and what could be improved.

Your iPad may arrive without a protective cover/case. These have been ordered, in line with infection control guidance, and will be with you soon. Please proceed to use the iPad without the case until it arrives – taking extra care when transporting / or cleaning. Do not add your own case.

How Does Virtual Visiting Work?

Each Virtual Visiting iPad supports the use of Skype and FaceTime for patients to communicate with family. In certain circumstances NHS Near Me can also be accessed. If you are in an area where NHS Near Me is already the established communication method between patient and family this can be continued. There may also be circumstances where NHS Near Me is the most appropriate platform, this will be based on a discussion with the MDT caring for the patient, the patient, family and the NHSG Near Me project team. At all other times please use FaceTime or Skype.

The iPad should be used to make outgoing calls only.

Skype is a software application which uses the internet to allow people to make free video and voice calls online. As it is a Microsoft company the person receiving the call will need to have Skype enabled on their phone, tablet or PC at home to allow connection. They will also need an email address ending in @outlook or @hotmail. More than one family member can be connected into the call. Skype user guides for staff and family are available on the Covid-19 section of the NHSG website.

FaceTime is an Apple software application which can only be used with Apple products. Like Skype it uses the internet to allow people to make free video and voice calls online. The person making the call will need to know the Apple ID email address of the person they wish to contact. Apple ID can be found under 'settings' on an Apple Device. More than one family member can be connected into the call. FaceTime user guides for staff and family are available on the Covid-19 section of the NHSG website.

NHS Near Me is a web-based video consulting tool, using the Attend Anywhere platform, that allows families to access a virtual waiting room where a member of staff can then join them and connect them with the patient. Any ward which requires use of NHS Near Me (where there is no alternative option), should contact the NHS Near Me project team on nhsg.nearme@nhs.net to set up accounts and be directed to training resources. Families do not need to register for an account but ward staff will have to issue them with the URL (website address). More than one family member can be connected into the call (to a maximum of around 4 people per call, including the patient).

Access to the staff WiFi network is available and the iPad will have been set up for this prior to arrival.

Can All Patients Access Virtual Visiting?

Yes, but many will have their own devices and won't need to use NHSG equipment to contact family.

Virtual Visiting should be discussed with every patient at the start of their stay and included as part of all care plan conversations. It is important to establish if a patient has their own device as soon as possible after admission. If they do not the NHS Grampian iPad can be offered as a way to keep in contact with family. A patient may initially refuse for various reasons – perhaps they are unsure of the technology - please revisit regularly in case they change their mind.

A Virtual Visiting conversation should include the following points:

- Establishing if the patient has or hasn't access to their own device to stay connected to family and the support they need.
- Do family members have access to a WiFi enabled device in their home to receive video calls?
- The opportunity for the patient to identify who is most important to them.
- Virtual Visiting may not look the same in each ward or area of the hospital. Some areas such as ITU predominately use NHS Near Me. Access to this will not be available in each area.
- Is the patient aware of the family members Apple ID (the email their Apple device is registered to) or their Skype account email? If not please contact the family and ask for them to share this information with the patient.
- Is the patient familiar with the technology or will they require support to call their family.
- Sign posting to the Virtual Visiting Information Guide (available on NHS Grampian Covid-19 Information webpage)
- The iPad is shared between all patients in the ward and will be kept locked away at all other times for this reason the iPad should be used for outgoing calls only.

Depending on demand, staff availability or family members availability some areas may choose to have a Virtual Visiting diary to ensure equity. However, please remember to maintain flexibility to ensure a person-centred approach at all times.

As a Staff Member What Responsibilities Do I have for the iPad?

Your main role will be to support patients to connect virtually with their family members however, we also ask you to:

- Ensure patient pays careful attention to hand hygiene before and after handling the iPad.
- Keep the iPad in its registered ward (the ward or area it was initially delivered to). We ask that you do not share iPads between areas.

After a patient contact (or call):

- Ask the patient to complete the Virtual Visiting evaluation (first use only). Link is on the homepage of the iPad.
- Ensure the iPad is thoroughly decontaminated – as per the NHSG iPad Decontamination Guidance.
- Clear the call history – as per instructions in NHSG Staff Guidance for Skype / FaceTime.
- Charge the iPad to ensure it is always ready to be used.
- Return the iPad to the designated safe and secure storage area in your ward.
- Report any lost function, missing cables, or breakages to IT. (Ext: 54444)
- Report any inappropriate use to your SCN or senior ward staff member.

Any other queries please contact gram-uhb.virtualwardvisit@nhs.net or your link Virtual Visiting Team member.

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Approved by:	NHSG Virtual Visiting Group