



CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence



September 2019

The Life Link Project

Background

The Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network works collaboratively with numerous partners to provide complex rehabilitation inpatient and community services for patients whom have experienced major traumatic life events the majority being neurological traumas including multiple trauma injuries and or long-term conditions. Patients and their families in complex rehabilitation inpatient services in Merseyside highlighted that issues such as finance, housing, carer burden was increasing their stress and anxiety levels.

Further they highlighted that the existing support for meeting their socioeconomic needs was difficult to access and fragmented. In response an integrated inpatient drop in clinic was piloted supported by three agencies, NHS, the Local Authority and the brain charity offering patients and their families support with various issues such as finance, housing, employment and more.

How did we involve people?

Patient and family pre-implementation semi structured interviews carried out on the initial site

Staff pre-implementation questionnaires and semi-structured interviews carried out on the initial site these approaches helped us to develop the Life Link clinics on the three further adoption sites

Both these approaches helped us to develop the Life Link clinics on the three further adoption sites



What was the aim of the project?

To offer an integrated drop in service within a complex inpatient rehabilitation unit, offering all patients support with socioeconomic issues. The Life Link clinic is supported by the NHS, the Local Authority and the Brain Charity all working together in the same place at the same time to offer advice, support and guidance on non-medical issues

What did we do?

Three agencies collaborated together to formulate a drop-in clinic open to all patients and their families using complex rehabilitation inpatient services

Gained support from CLAHRC NWC

Gained support from a former patient and family member, whom are guiding the project in their roles as public advisors, sharing their valuable insights of using the Life Link service

Replicated on three different units in two different trusts in total it is operational on four different complex rehabilitation inpatient units



What we found and what does this mean?

A small amount of data was collected at the first pilot site:-

Some improvement in users stress and anxiety levels post consultation was observed

Some improvement observed in how well managed users felt that their non-medical issues were post consultation

Some recurring themes indicating that some users may find it difficult to access the service due to the times it is facilitated

What next?

Formulation of a business plan to enable sustainable funding, further adoption, spread and the possibility of exploring making the Life Link more accessible for example phone line and or extended hours.

Two further adoption sites in two different organisations have been identified, these are partners of the Cheshire and Merseyside rehabilitation network

Full academic paper is being formulated and led by CLAHRC NWC



The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust



**Cheshire & Merseyside
Rehabilitation Network**



St Helens and Knowsley
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust

The Royal Liverpool and
Broadgreen University Hospitals
NHS Trust

What is NIHR CLAHRC / ARC North West Coast?

The Applied Research Collaboration North West Coast (ARC NWC) superceded CLAHRC NWC in September 2019. It is a partnership between universities, NHS, public, etc. Its mission is to undertake applied research to improve public health, wellbeing, quality of care & reduce health inequalities across the North West Coast region.

<https://arc-nwc.nihr.ac.uk/>