

Integrated Community Teams

Hertfordshire Community Trust - Our core values
Care - We put patients at the heart of everything we do
Respect - We treat people with dignity and respect
Quality - We strive for excellence and effectiveness at all times
Confidence - We do what we say we will do
Improve - We will improve through continuous learning and innovation



What is the approach?

The Integrated Community Team is a multidisciplinary team consisting of community nurses, community matrons, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and specialist palliative care nurses. They provide care to patients, primarily those who are housebound and need to be seen in their own homes. Patients are referred by a range of health and social care professionals for urgent intervention or routine care. Patients are assessed using a holistic approach to ensure that their individual health needs are identified, and to formulate a care plan or treatment programme. The team also considers the needs of the patient's carer.

The Integrated Community Service is county wide, divided into locality teams covering geographic areas. Each locality team is managed by a locality manager and team managers.

What are the aims?

The primary aims of the service are to support patients to manage their own long term health needs, to prevent unnecessary hospital admission, to support patients to be discharged from hospital back to their own homes. This includes the care of patients at the end of their lives.

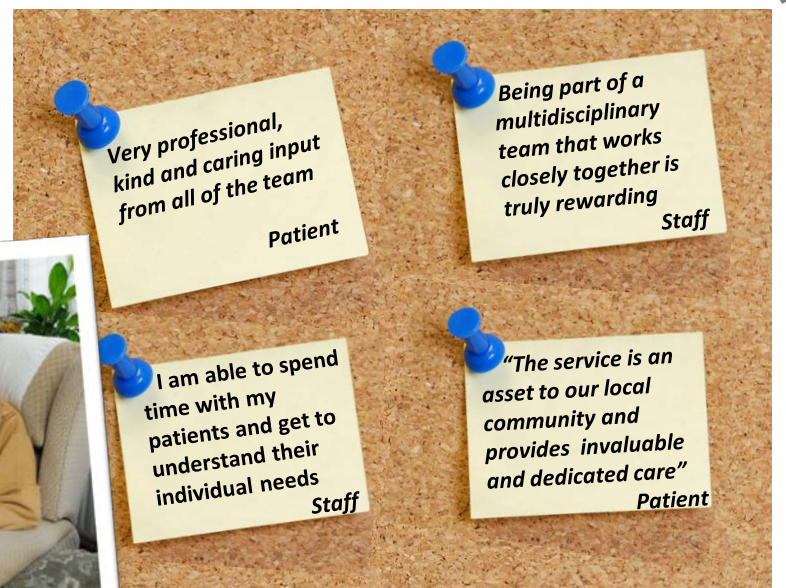
The service is for people over the age of 18, where the patient's home is the most appropriate setting for delivery of care. The service operates 24 hours a day, every day.

Across Hertfordshire, the integrated community team delivers around one million face to face patient contacts per year.



What are staff and users experiences?

“ The team has helped me through a very difficult time in my life. They have advised me on various issues regarding my condition, which has been extremely helpful. I have received first class care throughout. Thank you. ”



What are the benefits & outcomes?

We can react quickly if the patient's condition requires it. For urgent referrals, the team responds within hours. Other patients with less urgent needs will have a waiting period until an appointment becomes available. The team works hard to keep waiting times for these patients to a minimum.

There are a wide range of patient interventions and outcomes, depending on the needs of the patient at the point of referral.

The Integrated Community Team provide a range of services, some short term support and other longer term interventions. The aims of nursing or therapy intervention will be agreed with the individual patient at the beginning of the course of treatment.

Patients that are referred for rehabilitation from the therapy team can expect to set rehabilitation goals to work towards. An estimated 80% of patients go on to achieve these goals following a period of intervention.

The Community Matrons work with patients with multiple long term conditions who are at high risk of recurrent admission to hospital.

The integrated community team works closely with GPs and other services to ensure that care is coordinated and that patients are signposted to other services appropriately.

What are the costs?

Budgets for the service are set each year. In these teams, the vast majority of spending is on staff costs with some additional budget to cover products or equipment, and travel expenses. Recently we have been investing in mobile working, meaning that our staff have laptops to work from during their visits.

What are the impacts?

The performance of the team is measured in lots of ways. These includes :

- A monthly audit of referral response times,
- Monitoring of patients with pressure ulcers, catheters , and falls as part of a national audit called 'The Safety Thermometer'
- Getting feedback from patients using the patient experience questionnaire and the family and friends test
- Number of face to face patient contacts
- Clinically measurable change in response to rehabilitation using a nationally recognised outcome measure.
- Benchmarking with other comparable services using the national audits collated by the NHS Benchmarking Network.
- Staff feedback
- Investigating serious incidents or complaints about the service so we can learn from them and continuously improve our services.