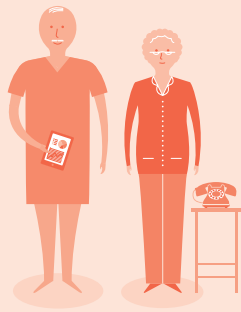


Identifying the barriers to and enablers for telehealth adoption and implementation



The MALT study conducted in-depth case studies of four local telehealth services to identify the main barriers to and facilitators of telehealth adoption and implementation. Through analysis of interview data collected from 105 frontline staff and managers, and 40 patients and 12 carers, the main factors affecting adoption across the case study sites are shown in the table below.

This table is provided in a paper published by the *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, which reports the findings of the case studies and describes the experience of nurses and other frontline staff, as users of telehealth for community nursing.

Barriers of telehealth adoption	Facilitators of telehealth adoption
Limited referral routes into telehealth meaning that only patients with high level needs are normally considered, not all of whom are felt to be suitable for telehealth	A simple and standard referral process that facilitates individual clinical judgement about patient suitability
Uncertainties about assessing patient suitability and difficulties predicting the impact of telehealth on patient anxiety and self-management	A dedicated role to manage or co-ordinate telehealth implementation and drive forward service improvements
Reservations about using new technologies to deliver patient care and anxieties among some staff about their own technical skills	A partnership and flexible approach to service design, which enables emerging barriers experienced by staff to be addressed
Staff perceptions that telehealth can increase workload and make planning work more difficult in responding to telehealth alerts	Understanding the various goals for telehealth and being able to identify clear objectives for using telehealth with a patient
Concerns about the impact of telehealth on nursing roles and uncertainty about responsibility for patients due to the shared delivery of care	An externally resourced system for installation, technical support, maintenance and de-installation
Difficulties obtaining accurate, timely and relevant data about patients and in ensuring data is shared with clinicians and other services supporting patients	An integrated and dedicated clinical system for monitoring and reviewing patients and a flexible and small team approach to delivering triage
The lack of evaluation and assessment of telehealth patients and the mixed published evidence about its clinical and cost effectiveness	Mobile equipment that is easy to use, offers accurate and reliable readings and allows monitoring to be tailored to patient need
The limited options to tailor telehealth to individual patients and the lack of other remote care technologies	An increasing awareness among staff that telehealth can be used as a tool for managing caseloads more efficiently
The impact of poorly designed pilots and targets for use, which can create a long-lasting reluctance among some staff to re-engage with telehealth	Clinical and practice-based learning about how to use telehealth more effectively and the sharing of patient benefits and good practice
Lack of clarity about telehealth duration and concerns about how to remove telehealth from patients who become reliant on remote monitoring	Accessible and ongoing training for staff about how to select and monitor patients remotely as well as the technological aspects of telehealth
Limited options for discharging patients who will benefit from continued use of telehealth from nursing caseloads	Local clinical champions who promote telehealth, encourage and support staff to refer patients and increase awareness of telehealth
The impact of other changes affecting community health services, which can mean that telehealth is not always a priority for staff	Services who are motivated to use new technologies and integrate telehealth into existing care pathways
Lack of a shared vision and rationale for telehealth and no commissioning and strategic ownership for investing in remote care technologies	Engagement from commissioners and strategic managers, which encourages staff to view telehealth as a long-term investment