

Using Near Me to support eating disorder services

NHS Highland use Near Me to support service users to engage with their eating disorder service by significantly reducing their travel time and by allowing them to safely attend appointments during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In this case study, NHS Highland Eating Disorder Service describe how they have used Near Me to deliver their services across the Highland area.

The team also describe the refinements they made to their Near Me process to continue to deliver their service during the Covid-19 pandemic.



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"Using Near Me has allowed patients who have really struggled to travel to attend appointments to make progress in their recovery from Eating Disorders."

NHS Highland

Background



NHS Highland is the largest Health Board by area in Scotland, covering 25,657km² with a population of 235,500. As a result, some people accessing the NHS Highland Eating Disorder Service had to travel significant distances to attend appointments. The service recognised that Near Me could support their service users to engage with appointments by reducing their travel.

Approach



The service began to use Near Me in 2019. Initially service users would call from a local community hospital to the central hospital where the service was based. This allowed physical checks to be conducted by a community nurse. However, during the covid-19 pandemic, NHS Highland has made further refinements to their service to allow service users to call from home while it is unsafe to travel.

The service implemented the following processes to set up their Near Me service.

- **Methods to record accurate weight for service user**
The service used methods such as weighing at a local community hospital, weighing while on the phone, or with a family member, or for service users further on their recovery, weighing themselves. The service selected the method most suitable for each service user.
- **Method for recording food diary**
The service invited service users to use an app such as [Recovery Record](#) or [Rise up](#) to record their food intake.
- **Involvement of family and carers**
The service explored adding family and carers to calls using Near Me three way call function. NHS Highland have used Near Me to involve carers in providing Meal Support, where service users are supported in preparing and eating meals.
- **Support for people newly accessing the service**
The clinicians supported new service users to access the service by calling them initially and taking them through the process to access Near Me. They also made use of a central receptionist when they felt it would be helpful for the service user.

More information



Visit the [Near Me webpages](#) to find out more about Near Me. If you are a clinician interested in using Near Me, visit the [National Video Conferencing Service website](#) for more information.

Impact



- **More valuable compared to a phone call**
The service reports that Near Me calls are more valuable than telephone calls for both clinicians and service users.
- **Easy to use**
Clinicians find Near Me straightforward to use.
- **Reduced service user travelling**
Service users no longer need to travel long distances for appointments, reducing the cost of attending appointments as well as the time required out of their day.
- **Ability to continue providing care while maintaining social distancing**
The service have adapted their use of Near Me to minimise the use of community facilities and have been able to continue to see service users during the pandemic. Clinicians also use Near Me to support working from home. Once the service is able to restart its clinics, they will use community settings to support their Near Me calls once again.
- **Some service users chose not to use Near Me as they preferred not to see their own image during a call**
The service accommodates service users preferences and would review these at a later date, if appropriate.