The first in a series of Hospital at Home virtual learning sessions took place on 21 October. The topic of the session was 'How to start a service'. Presenters involved in the development of Hospital at Home in NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Fife spoke about their experiences of starting the service in those areas.

NHS Lanarkshire were the first Hospital at Home team to start up in Scotland. They began with a one week trial where they saw 10 patients, 8 of whom were able to be kept at home. This was then followed by a 6 month pilot starting in December 2011.

NHS Fife soon followed, setting up their first service in 2012 in West Fife. Over the next 2 years the service was rolled out across Fife. Initially the service was for people aged 75 and older but this has now been expanded to all adults with frailty.

Impact of Hospital at Home in NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Fife
- Significant impact of patients being in their own home and having their own food.
- Continued support from social services.
- Decline in hospital referrals in both areas.
- NHS Lanarkshire – of an average 3,000 patients seen per year, c. 80% are seen at home.
- Positive patient, family and carer feedback.

'[Hospital at Home] gave me such self confidence and assurance when the nurses came in to check on me. They are a magnificent team that couldn't have been more helpful and highly professional'

Patient feedback, NHS Fife

Keys to Success

- The NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Fife teams both expressed the importance of involving GPs in the process.
- Clear data and measurement are important to know where improvement needs are and to highlight successes.
- Clear governance and structure are important for long term success.
- Relationship building to build confidence.
- Multi-disciplinary Teams are a key part of the success of Hospital at Home.
- Start small being mindful of the end goal.

Challenges

- Due to initial uncertainty about the benefits of the Hospital at Home service, funding was often raised as a challenge, especially in the early days.
- General resistance to change and challenging the traditional environment.
- Clearly communicating what Hospital at Home is and is not, making it clear that it is not simply primary care.
- The management of rural areas.

QI Tools

A range of Quality Improvement tools to support your work can be found in the Hospital at Home Community Forum. For access to the channel please contact his.livingwell@nhs.scot.

Hospital at Home during COVID-19

- New challenges in the light of COVID but also opportunities.
- NHS Fife have expanded the service to more of a 7 day model.
- NHS Lanarkshire have been approved to double capacity.

What's next?

- Technological improvements continue to help to make a difference to the service and improving access.
- Spreading Hospital at Home to every board would make a big impact.

Future Dates for your Diary

12 November 2020	Leadership and Building Will
14 December 2020	Governance
14 January 2021	Staffing
4 February 2021	Working with Other Services
25 February 2021	Technology
18 March 2021	Decision Making and Care Planning