



Helping nursing homes to make the right call reduces 999 emergencies by up to 50%

A brand new tool for working with nursing and residential homes, has been developed in conjunction with the Manchester Triage Group and launched by North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and the Advanced Life Support Group (ALSG), helping residents to get the most appropriate care more quickly.

Staff at nursing and residential homes can now be trained to use the 'Nursing and Residential Triage Tool' (NaRT) in order to determine whether a patient requires an emergency ambulance or if it would be more appropriate for them to be cared for by a GP or urgent care service.

Specialising in working in the community, Paramedic, Mark Wenman found that in 2016 around 6.8% of all 999 emergencies in the North West were callouts to nursing and residential homes, and of these jobs, 19% did not require hospital treatment. Mark enlisted the help of Triage Development and Evaluation Paramedic, Steph Allmark and started looking into a way of finding these patients more appropriate care.

Mark said: "Patients in care and residential homes are often much more comfortable being treated where they are without the need to be admitted into hospital and wherever possible we will do everything we can to make sure this is possible. This tool is not only hugely beneficial to the ambulance service as it frees up our vehicles and crews for serious and life-threatening emergencies, it also means that the patient is treated in a surrounding that they are used to with people that they know."

The NaRT tool, based on the world renowned Manchester Triage System, works by allowing carers, who have prior knowledge of the patient's health needs, to look at the symptoms being presented and use the tool to find the most appropriate care.

Holme Manor Residential Home in Rawtenstall, Lancashire, is one of the homes where the NaRT tool has been introduced with successful results.

Suzanne Harrison, Manager said: "The triage tool is fantastic and really helping to improve our service delivery. There has definitely been a decrease in 999 calls since we started using it; I feel



Richard Peters, Community Specialist Paramedic, delivered Nursing and Residential Triage training to Suzanne Harrison, Manager of Holme Manor Residential Home, and her team.

all homes should get involved. The tool has been invaluable to staff who now feel they have clear guidance to make the correct call, ensuring each resident receives the correct care for their needs. As a result of these changes, the quality of patient care has improved significantly.

“The tool has been invaluable to the seven senior staff, including myself, who received training in how to use it from Community Specialist Paramedic Richard Peters. Following training we all feel more confident and supported as we now have clear guidance to make exactly the correct call something we can easily pass on to other members of staff too.”

Initially, the tool was implemented in just three care homes in the area, however its success has now meant that it has now been implemented in over 200 homes across the North West. The training for the NaRT tool has also been rolled out in Yorkshire, Northern Ireland, Norway and Germany. Using the tool has proven successful in trials and has reduced 999 calls to nursing and residential homes by over 50% in some cases.

NaRT regional instructors train key nursing home staff on how to use the tool, who are then able to cascade the training to all their staff within the homes. They are then able to refer to the tool to help decide on the most appropriate care based on the symptoms being presented by the patient.

The introduction of the Nursing and Residential Triage Tool is just one of a number of service improvements being made across NWS, as part of the trust's Transforming Patient Care programme. The programme will see NWS transform services to improve care for patients, by supporting them in the right way as early on in their NHS experiences as possible.

For more information on NWS Transformation services, please visit www.nwas.nhs.uk/transformingpatientcare

If you would like more information on implementing the Nursing and Residential Triage, or identifying regional instructors in your area, please contact manchestertriage@alsg.org for further information or visit the MTS website www.triagenet.net