

The Virtual Royal Infirmary Strategy



Easy read version



This is the easy read summary of our virtual services strategy.

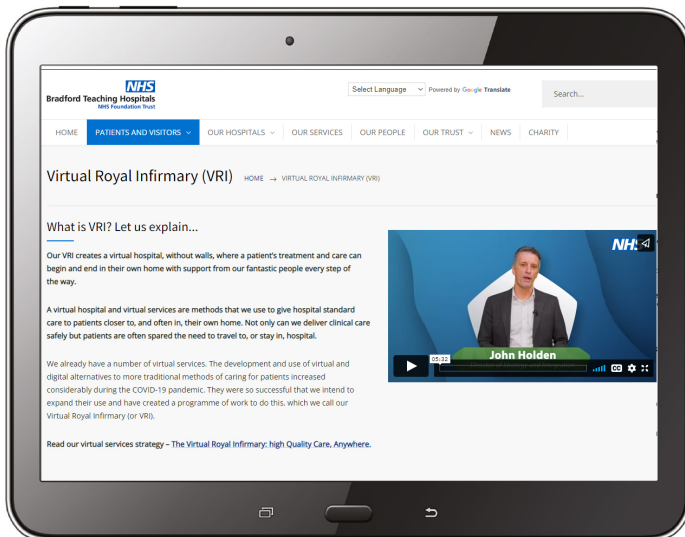
A strategy is a plan.

It sets out all the things we are going to do to provide services closer to where people live.

This will often be in their own homes.

You can see the full version of the strategy at

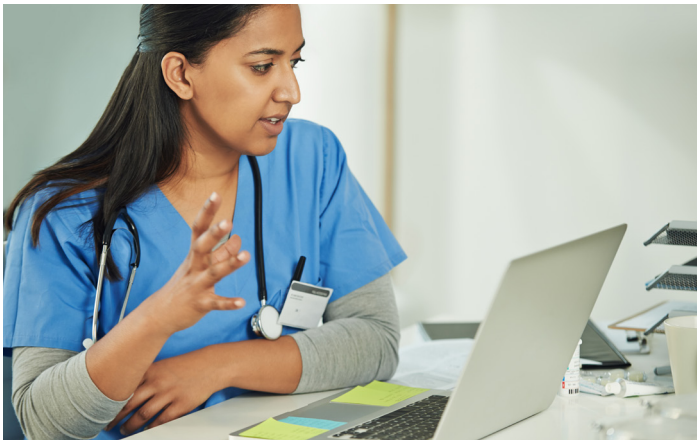
www.bradfordhospitals.nhs.uk/vri/



Foreword



This plan sets out how Bradford Teaching Hospitals is planning to deliver some services virtually.



Virtually can mean using computer technology like laptops, tablets and phones over the internet.

It may also mean that our nurses visit you in your own home.

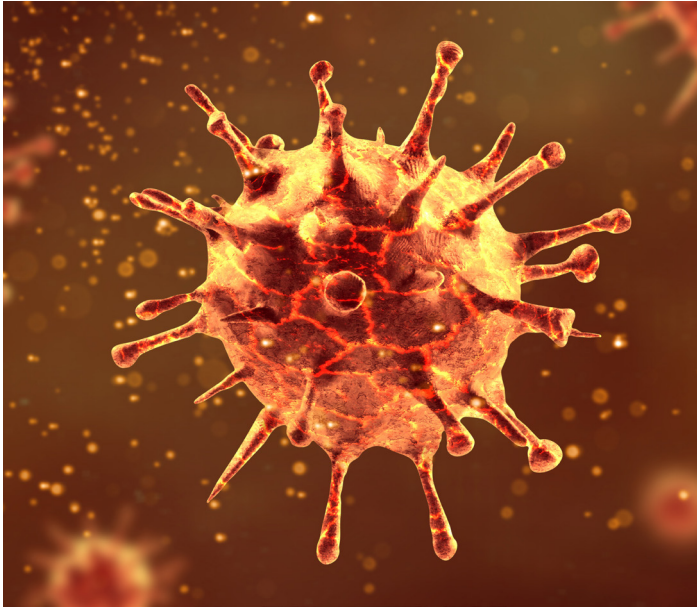


Virtual services are ways of providing hospital standard care to patients closer to where they live.

This is often in their own home.



They are designed to make the care experience better for patients and their families.



We have been using virtual services for a long time.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we started to use them much more.



This was because people couldn't come to the hospital.



They worked really well so we have decided to use them even more.

Join us on our exciting journey to deliver virtual care.

Introduction



We want to create virtual services so that our doctors and nurses can care for more people at home.

There are lots of good reasons for doing this. They include:



- When patients are cared for at home, they do not need to travel or stay with us overnight



- Patients get better much quicker at home because they are with their own things and the people they know



- We work more closely with other care providers when we provide care virtually. We can share information more easily on how best to care for a patient. This can often mean that a patient may not need to be sent to hospital for a test or examination



- If we keep people out of hospital wherever we can it means there are more beds for very ill people



- Using technology helps us to make information to give more patients and their families help and guidance.



- This information will be designed so that it is easy to find and read using a table or a smart phone at any time of the day or night.

What is a virtual service?



Virtual services can be provided in lots of ways and are used for lots of reasons.

They are all designed to make care better for patients.

Here are some examples:



Elderly Virtual Ward

We have been using our Elderly Virtual Ward since 2012. It has won lots of awards.



Using the virtual ward means that instead of an older patient coming to hospital we can assess them and often keep them at home.



When this happens we use doctors and nurses in our virtual team to monitor and look after people where they live.

We call this “step-up care”.



When a patient has stayed in hospital we can allow them to go home sooner by using our virtual ward team to care for them at home.

We call this “step-down care”.



Lots of our older patients think it is much better to be at home and we agree. Patients often recover better and quicker.

Home monitoring



We can use devices that allow patients to be examined at home by our virtual team in the hospital.



We can examine the heart, lungs, skin, ears and stomach in the same way as we would in hospital.



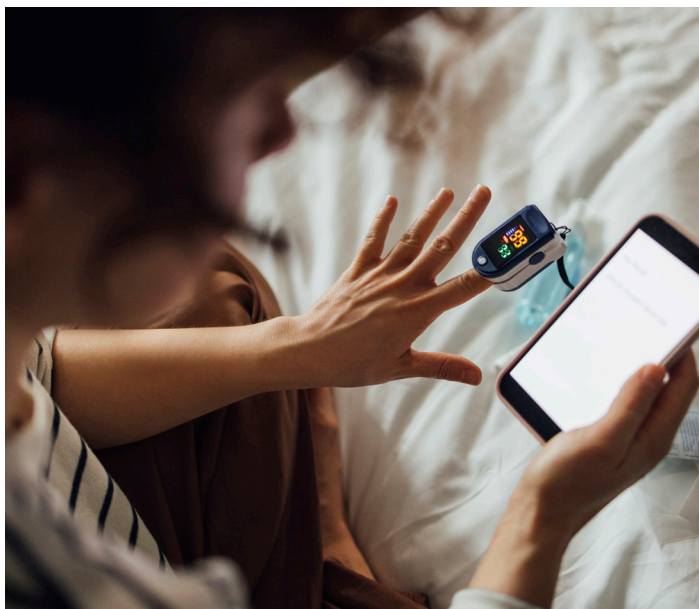
We have used home monitoring to help us take care of poorly children without them needing to come into hospital.

This works well because children often become anxious about visits to hospital.

Diagnostic Virtual Ward



Often when patients in hospital are almost better, we need to do one last test before they can go home.



Using our diagnostic virtual ward, we can send people home with digital monitoring.

We then get them to come back a day or two later for their test.



This often means that patients get to go home 2 or 3 days sooner.

We will help everyone use virtual services



We know that there is a place for virtual services alongside traditional ways of caring for people such as appointments in hospital.



We want everyone to be able to choose how they receive their care and feel they are a partner in their own health.



We will still be there for people who can't access digital technology or want to be cared for in traditional ways.

We promise to help everyone use technology if they need it.



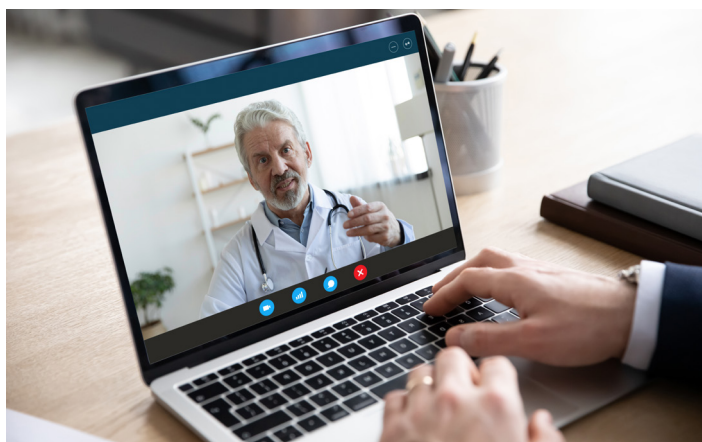
Most of all we want patients and their families to feel that they had a good experience when using our services.

Our ambitions – these are the things we want to happen



We have developed 5 ambitions for our work on virtual services. These are:

- Making sure that all our specialities have some form of virtual care. We will work with other health and care providers in Bradford to help this happen
- Training our doctors, nurses and other professionals so they are even better at providing care in a virtual way
- Help everyone to use digital technology well
- Use digital technology to make information that patients and the people who look after them can see at any time to get help and advice
- Make sure that virtual services make care better for our patients and their families.



How will we do this?

To help us with our ambitions we are working in 5 key areas. These are:

Using the virtual ward more widely



We already have a virtual ward for elderly patients. It works so well we now want to have a virtual ward for all our specialities.

We have made a start by introducing a virtual ward for some of our patients in general surgery.

Use virtual services for more outpatient appointments



During the COVID-19 pandemic a lot of our outpatient appointments took place by phone or video call. This worked well.

We are now working to make sure that most follow-up outpatient appointments are done this way.

Patient Education



We know that patients and their families often just need some advice on how to manage their illness.

Providing videos that people can find easily and watch on tablets or phones is a really good way of doing this.



We are developing videos and other digital information so that patients and their families can get help and guidance whenever they need it.

Readiness for treatment



Being fit and ready for treatment helps patients recover more quickly afterwards.

We will work with other health and care providers across Bradford to give people advice on being fit and ready as they can before treatment.

Long term conditions



We will work with patients with long term conditions to monitor their health regularly while they are at home.

This will allow us to see signs of their illness getting worse.

We can then take action more quickly if we need to.

This will help stop a patient's condition from getting so bad that they need to come to hospital.

Conclusion



Virtual services give us the opportunity to do much more for local people.

We will be able to care for people in new and different ways.

Our aim is to use these new ways of caring for people to improve patient experience and health outcomes.

This will be a challenging and exciting journey. Lets make it together.

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