Providing teens with confidential and timely access to healthcare

Overview

Traditional access to healthcare can present barriers to young people who may feel embarrassed or be concerned about the stigma associated with accessing certain services.

Healthcare provision is often inconsistent across different schools and geographic areas and teenagers can lack confidence and knowledge about how and where to seek advice.

The ChatHealth secure platform allows two-way, confidential communication between secondary school students aged 11-19 and adolescent health teams, including school nursing.

The text messaging service was co-designed with young people and health professionals to provide access to advice, signposting and support for a range of physical and mental health and wellbeing issues.

Results / impacts

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust generated more than £225,000 in revenue and created four full time jobs through ChatHealth in 2015-16.

In addition to school nursing, ChatHealth is now being used by health visiting, travelling families, early-start and learning disabilities teams.

Access to ChatHealth has increased, now reaching more than one million young people across 30 UK locations.

Improved equality and reach has seen 1 in 5 male text users compared with 1 in 10 males attending face-to-face clinics.

ChatHealth has facilitated closer inter-agency working between health, police and social care, improving communication, decision-making and the safeguarding of vulnerable young people.

The AHSN’s role

Originally pioneered by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT), East Midlands AHSN adopted ChatHealth as a major industry and enterprise project in 2015, investing more than £100,000 in adoption and spread to frontline teams across the UK.

East Midlands AHSN has been instrumental in service development and providing advice and assistance on intellectual property, commercial development and marketing.

Adoption and spread

Access to ChatHealth was extended in 2015-16, from 65,000 young people in Leicestershire to more than a million across 30 locations UK-wide including: Sussex, Lancashire, Shropshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Rochdale, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, Walsall, Warwickshire and Nottinghamshire.

ChatHealth has been showcased at NHS Testbed events and International School Nursing and Public Health England conferences.

Find out more

Jimmy Endicott
Mobile Media Development Manager, Leicester Partnership NHS Trust
E: jimmy.endicott@leicspart.nhs.uk

www.atlas.ahsnnetwork.com/chathealth/
www.emahsn.org.uk