

Creating personalised, flexible housing and care using future-proof technology

The challenge

Housing for older people needs to be flexible enough to be suitable for a wide range of people, and to also have the capacity to be tailored to meet individual needs, which may change over time.

How has including technology in two of its latest developments enabled Hanover Scotland to help older people remain independent at home for longer by providing integrated, preventative and person-centred care?

What we did

Hanover Scotland has recently opened two new developments which have been purpose built to provide high quality accommodation and care for older people. Varis Court in Moray and Linkwood View in Elgin have been developed in partnership with Health & Social Care Moray (the Integrated Joint Board involving Moray Council and NHS Grampian) and the Scottish Government.

The developments provide accommodation for a range of older people, including those with dementia, wheelchair users, people with complex care needs and patients leaving hospital. Both schemes have onsite care staff and tenants are supported with the provision of 24 hour planned individual care and telecare to suit their specific needs.

Both Varis Court and Linkwood View have Communicall Vi systems which provide a platform for care delivery, access control and telecare technology. These systems have been installed using Cat VI cabling, which ensures they can be easily upgraded as technology advances, future-proofing Hanover Scotland's investment.



“ These developments demonstrate our commitment to developing modern housing and care that suits the varying needs of older people and has been designed to help people remain in their own homes with their own front doors. By working in close partnership with health and social care, and including cutting-edge technology we have created a blueprint for innovation and excellence in housing for older people.

Helen Murdoch, Chief Executive, Hanover Scotland

About the developments

Varis Court



Varis Court is a purpose built development with innovative, high quality services for older people. Based close to the centre of Forres in the north of Scotland, the development comprises 33 flats; 21 extra care units, 7 dementia friendly extra care units and 5 augmented care units managed by the NHS.

The development has a team of staff onsite, including a Housing with Care Manager to assist residents to manage their tenancies, and staff providing meals and care. There are communal areas for dining, activities and relaxation, and there is a dementia friendly zone which includes bespoke communal facilities.

The development also contains an augmented care unit, with five flats used by Forres Health Centre to provide recovery, enablement and support services for people just discharged from hospital, or at risk of being admitted. These units are supported by 24 care from NHS staff. Providing complex health care interventions as part of a short term stay in a homely environment avoids the need for acute or unnecessary admissions or long stays in hospital.

Linkwood View

Linkwood View consists of 30 two-bedroom flats including four wheelchair accessible flats, six flats specifically designed for people with dementia, and 20 extra care flats. Tenants are required to have a minimum of four hours personal care per week from the local authority to be eligible for these properties.

Linkwood View has an onsite team, and tenants are able to access staff on a 24/7 365 days a year basis. Person-centred care is provided according to individual needs, and can include meal support, personal care and overnight care. All care is responsive to changing circumstances.





Christina McKelvie, Minister for Older People and Equalities, visits Linkwood View

The technology

The Communicall Vi system provides a platform for staff to communicate with tenants and each other, and gives tenants the means to call for help 24 hours a day. Each property has a speech module mounted on the wall, which enables tenants to talk with staff. Tenants can also use the pullcords installed in each room of each dwelling or a myamie pendant worn on the wrist or around their neck to alert staff in an emergency from anywhere in the development. Staff carry a handset which will notify them of alerts and inform them of the type and location. If the onsite staff are too busy to answer, calls are received at Hanover Careline's 24 hour monitoring centre which will arrange an appropriate response.

The developments also have additional technology, funded by a £12,500 grant from the Scottish Government's TEC Programme. This is offered based on the assessed needs of tenants and includes:

Property exit sensors

These have been fitted to all exit doors, and can also be fitted to internal doors. These enable staff to respond in the event of, for example, a tenant with dementia leaving their home during the night.

Fall detector

Worn on the wrist, this discreet device will alert staff if it detects the wearer has fallen, enabling them to respond quickly.

Bed occupancy sensor

This specially designed pressure pad fits under the mattress and provides an early warning by alerting that the user has left their bed and not returned within a pre-set time period. The sensor can also be programmed to switch on lights, helping people find their way to and from bed easily and helping to avoid falls.

Epilepsy sensor

These sensors monitor tenants as they sleep, detecting their movement in bed and can differentiate normal movements from epileptic seizures, meaning staff can be alerted without the need for them to disturb the tenant with regular checks throughout the night.

Activity monitoring

Door contacts and PIRs can be used in dwellings to monitor an individual's daily habits, such as bed times, and using the kitchen and bathroom. This can help to inform care packages, and alert carers to any deterioration in mobility or health e.g. increased use of the bathroom may indicate a urinary tract infection.

Wandersafe™

Some tenants are using the Possum Wandersafe™ system, a wrist worn device which will send an alert to a receiving device if it senses the wearer nearing an exit. The carer will receive details of the person and the location, for example 'Mr Smith has just gone out of the garden door', enabling them to offer assistance if needed.

Case study: Connected Healthcare

Results

Health and Social Care Moray is 'Committed to supporting people – particularly those whose needs are complex and involve support from health and social care at the same time – to live longer, healthier lives as independently as possible, through the provision of proactive, joined-up services.'¹

Varis Court and Linkwood View are examples of this commitment in action. A multi-agency project management team was established to ensure the developments met the health, care and housing needs of tenants, and the post of Operations Management – Care was joint funded by health and social care and Hanover. Regular meetings take place with stakeholders, including Hanover Scotland, Moray Council, and Health and Social Care Moray to ensure that the developments continue to offer integrated, proactive care and support.

From a technology point of view, both developments utilise the Housing Service Portal (HSP), to help ensure the efficiency and quality of care delivered. The HSP is a specialist app running on a Windows tablet which connects via Wi-Fi to the Communicall Vi system and gives a live view of tenants' activities as they happen. The app enables various factors, such as movement and sensors being activated, to be interrelated in order to prioritise and manage care. The history view enables past calls from individuals to be examined over time, helping to identify possible changes in need at an early stage, enabling care packages to be adjusted. Because the system operates using the schemes' WiFi, the app can be used from anywhere in the schemes at any time.

Feedback

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We have all the care that we need but we still have our independence.

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We've got the privacy of our own home and the help that we need when we need it. If you need help, all you do is press a button.

Residents

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It's peace of mind and confidence.

”

Relatives

“

Now we're able to put in technology, we can have tracker and watches which mean we can locate residents at any time but they can wander freely.

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Staff

“

This facility is a really innovative way of providing accommodation and care for older people, including older people with dementia. It's a great partnership between the local authority and the health board as well as Hanover. It's all about helping to keep older people independent for as long as possible.

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Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland, visiting Varis Court in July 2017

¹ <https://hscmoray.co.uk/index.html>