

Virtual ward platform technologies for acute respiratory infections

Information for the public

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NICE has said that virtual ward platform technologies can be used in the NHS to monitor people with acute respiratory infection in their usual place of residence. They can be used for people who have been:

- referred for hospital admission or
- admitted to hospital and their condition is stable or improving but still needs to be monitored.

The NHS is collecting more evidence for virtual ward platform technologies on:

- how they affect people's treatment
- the experiences of patients, carers and healthcare professionals who use them
- how much they cost and
- the demographics of the people admitted to virtual wards.

Virtual ward platform technologies comprise:

- an app or website used by the person having treatment
- medical devices for measuring their vital signs and
- a digital platform for their healthcare professional to monitor their condition.

They allow people's conditions to be monitored remotely, which allows them to have care in their usual place of residence instead of being cared for in hospital.

NICE has produced this guidance so people with acute respiratory infections can be offered admission to a virtual ward while the NHS is collecting more evidence.

You might be asked if details of your treatment can be collected as evidence. You can ask your health care professional for more information about being involved and how your information will be stored and used.

Is this treatment right for me?

Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. Your family can be involved too, if you wish. See [our webpage on making decisions about your care](#).

Questions to think about

- How comfortable would you feel being cared for at home on a virtual ward, instead of in hospital?
- What are the risks? How likely are they?
- How will admission to a virtual ward affect my day-to-day life?
- What support will I receive while on a virtual ward?
- What happens if I do not want to be admitted to a virtual ward? Are there other options available?
- How will my information be used if it is collected?

Information and support

The [NHS webpage on respiratory tract infections](#) may be a good place to find out more.

[Asthma and Lung UK](#) (0300 222 5800) can give you advice and support.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

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