

## **Health and Wellbeing Group June 2022 (Working with the NHS Northwest Innovation Agency)**

The June meeting of the Patient and Public Involvement Senate of the Innovation Agency involved three topics.

1. Medimusic (<https://medimusic.co/>)

This is an App which uses Artificial Intelligence to create a bespoke playlist of music to relieve symptoms for individuals who suffer from anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain etc. It is also being used in care homes for people with dementia as it is now well-known that people with dementia are still able to enjoy music. More information is available on the website.

2. Northwest Genomic Medicine Service (<https://www.nw-gmsa.nhs.uk/>)

The purpose of genomic testing in medicine is to enable earlier diagnosis of conditions which are hereditary by using genomic testing. Earlier diagnosis clearly leads to more timely management of these conditions, hopefully leading to better outcomes. Examples include heel-prick tests for premature babies to determine if they carry the gene that renders them more prone to deafness resulting from antibiotics commonly used for premature babies, thus enabling clinicians to consider suitable alternatives. Also, testing can be done for a gene rendering some cancer patients more likely to suffer severe side-effects from cancer chemotherapy, to diagnose familial hypercholesterolaemia and several other serious conditions.

3. Cytosponge

This is in the process of being trialled for use as an alternative for endoscopy which is used among other reasons for monitoring patients with the condition Barrett's oesophagus, which is a condition which can lead to cancer and therefore cell samples from the oesophagus have to be collected regularly, and in the past this could only be done via endoscopy. The Cytosponge procedure can be carried out in a GP surgery under the supervision of a nurse and involves swallowing a large capsule which then opens out in the body and is drawn back up via an attached piece of string, collecting the requisite cell samples on the way. It is expected to be much less uncomfortable for the patient than an endoscopy.

The Patient Safety Ambassadors met later in the month with the topics being Medication Safety which was initially discussed at the March meeting, and also a project to increase the use of home blood pressure monitoring.

The project relating to pain management with the aim of reducing the prescribing of opiates such as Codeine and Morphine, is being initiated and the plan is to offer a variety of other means of pain control to patients while hopefully gradually reducing their opioid usage.

There is also a project to try to reduce polypharmacy (the prescribing of a large number of medications to a patient) by holding more medication reviews. The purpose of medication reviews is to ensure that all medication prescribed is the most suitable for each patient, and to increase patient understanding of the reasons for the prescribing of their medication, to ensure the safety and efficacy of the treatment with minimisation of side-effects.

There was also a presentation about introducing self-monitoring of blood pressure by patients at home in order to relieve the pressure on GP surgeries by reducing the number of hypertension clinics held 'in-house'. Government funding is providing for about 200,000 monitors to be available across the country. Patients would be trained on how to use the machines and how to submit their readings to their managing clinician. It is hoped that this will improve management of patients identified with high blood pressure, and thus reduce the number of heart attacks and strokes which can occur as a result of hypertension.

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