TOOL SELECTED- MICROSOFT TEAMS

Features of MS-Teams

1. **Prompt communication**
2. **Remotely accessible to anyone to join the meetings**
3. **Effective screen sharing/files/documents sharing**
4. **Good quality video and audio calls**
5. **Less burden of administrative tasks**
6. **Effective staff communication**
7. **Secured staff information**

WHY MICROSOFT TEAMS?

1. Our selected productive tool is Microsoft Teams

2. Why Teams? Because it gives a single platform where the staff can effectively communicate and find workplace updates.

3. Microsoft Teams can be used for the following purposes:

a. Individual and group messages

b. Team channels

c. Announcements

d. Online meetings

e. Sharing and working on files

f. Notifications and @mentions

g. Different channels in Teams can be effectively used for better communication and other updates.

This tool is quite useful and meaningful for Ashford because our staff works in different locations and for effective meeting updates and better communication remotely accessible tool such as MS-Teams is used.

WHY MICROSOFT TEAMS IS SUITABLE?

Microsoft Teams connects the staff securely across different floors, buildings and remote sites. Because of Teams, staff and other members can get summarised information of the chats, minutes of the meetings etc.

Virtual visits: Ashford can use video calling to connect resident to GP or other medical specialist without requiring stressful or time consuming travel

Staff Communication and Daily Updates

Effective and good communication at Ashford is the key to successful clients and maintaining professional relationship.

Staff at Ashford work in different locations, places, Good communication is important at Ashford because staff work in different places, locations, including service users' homes, supported living settings and the main office.

During a normal working day, staff may need to share:

1. **Changes to visits**
2. **Staff availability**
3. **Daily updates**
4. **Important announcements**
5. **Meeting information**
6. **Training updates**
7. **Changes that other staff need to know about**

At the moment, Ashford has problems with missed updates, repeated work and unclear communication.

Having a clearer way of communicating could help staff work better together and reduce confusion

HOW COULD ASHFORD USE TEAMS?

Ashford could set up a few simple channels, for example:

1. **Team Meetings**
2. **For general messages and reminders.**
3. **For training dates and learning materials.**
4. **Daily routine updates**
5. **Management Updates**
6. **For important information staff need during the day.**
7. **Team Meetings**
8. **For meeting information and follow-up actions.**
9. **Staff Announcements**
10. **Professional Training**
11. **For information that only needs to be seen by senior staff.**
12. **Access to the private channels for specific members of the staff**
13. **Very meaningful for the employees to look for a specific information at a specific channel.**

HOW WOULD THIS HELP ASHFORD?

Using Teams could make everyday communication quicker and more organised.

It could help to:

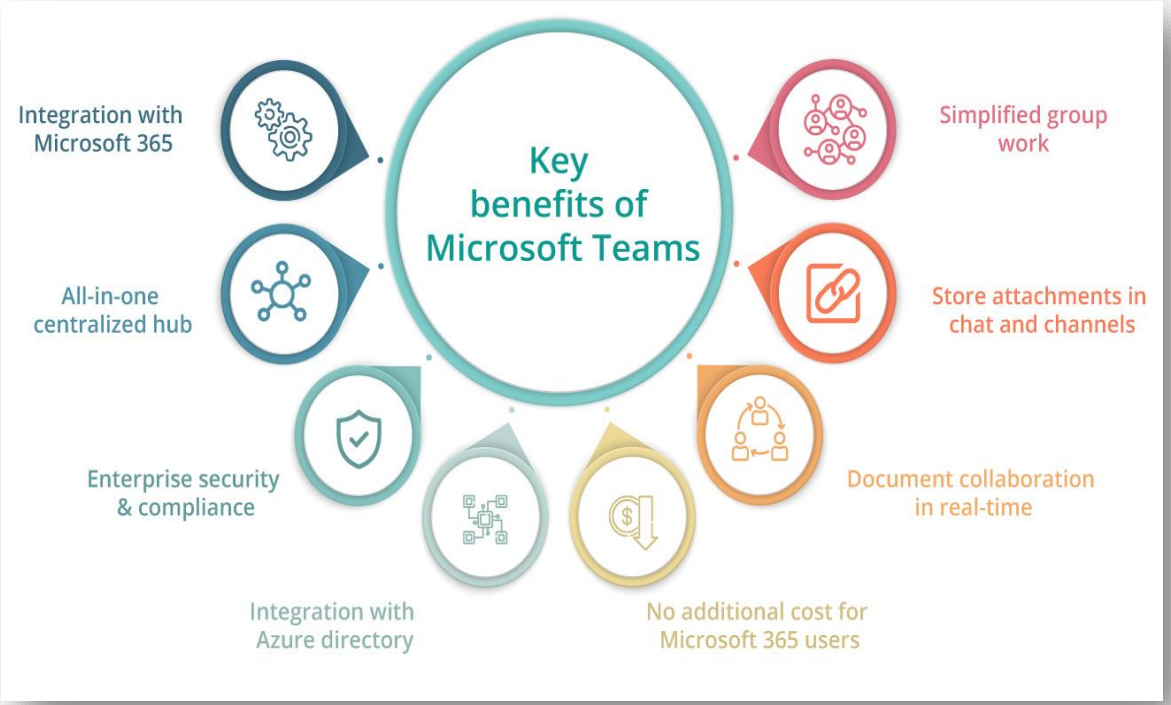
1. **Daily reminders of the messages and no missed messages.**
2. **Repetition of the same message/email is avoided.**
3. **Important updates at one place/one channel/one platform.**
4. **Effective communication between employees and company staff.**
5. **Team work and strong bonding with the employees and staff.**
6. **Old messages/information updates can be easily looked for.**

This is particularly useful for Ashford because it support workers, nurses, coordinators and office staff who work in different locations.

ADVANTAGES OF TEAMS

There are several advantages of using Microsoft Teams at Ashford:

1. **Effective communication ability– staff can communicate without everyone needing to be in the same place.**
2. **Wonderful teamwork and coordination– nurses, support workers, coordinators and office staff can stay connected.**
3. **Access from different locations – staff can use Teams on approved computers, tablets or mobile devices.**
4. **One roof-Single platform– messages, meetings and shared workplace information can be easier to find in Teams.**
5. **Works well with other Microsoft applications and Microsoft 365– Teams works with other Microsoft applications already used by Ashford**
6. **Excellent Security features – Microsoft provides security and compliance controls for Teams**



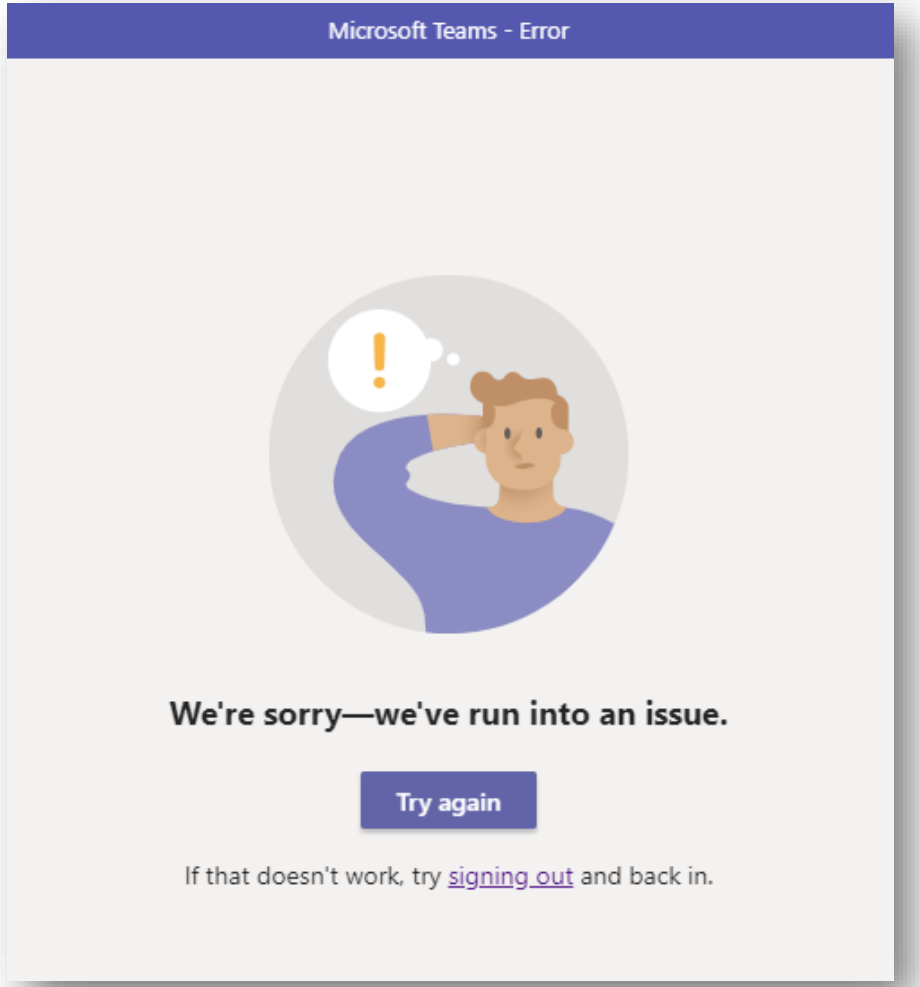
POSSIBLE PROBLEMS

Noticeable limitations/issues in Microsoft Teams

1. **New generation has easy access to it but the old generation find it difficult to use it.**
2. **Prior training how to run, important features, functions is required.**
3. **Distracting notifications**
4. **Good speed internet facility and suitable device required to run Microsoft Teams.**
5. **Too many channels could make Teams confusing.**
6. **Access to information needs to be controlled.**
7. **Staff need to be careful when dealing with confidential information.**

This means that simply introducing Teams would not solve Ashford's communication problems. Staff would also need clear guidance about how and when it should be used.

CQC highlights the importance of keeping information secure and making sure staff understand their responsibilities



Confidentiality and Data Protection

Confidentiality is particularly important because Ashford works with people who have care and support needs.

Ashford should make sure that:

1. **Staff use their work accounts.**
2. **Access is only given to the right employees.**
3. **Staff understand what information can and cannot be shared.**
4. **Employees receive data protection training.**
5. **Access permissions are regularly checked.**
6. **Organisational confidentiality policies are followed.**

CQC states that care information should be kept secure and only available to people who are authorised to access it

Teams should mainly be used for staff communication. It should not automatically replace Ashford's official care-record system, because care records still need to be accurate, complete and up to date

HOW COULD ASHFORD INTRODUCE TEAMS?

We think Ashford should introduce Teams gradually.

1. **Decide how Teams will be used**
2. **Agree what information belongs on Teams.**
3. **Create simple channels**
4. **Avoid creating too many channels at the beginning.**
5. **Train staff**
6. **Show employees how to use Teams correctly and safely.**
7. **Try it with a smaller team**
8. **This would allow Ashford to identify problems before everyone starts using it.**
9. **Ask for feedback**
10. **Find out what works well and what staff find difficult.**
11. **Review the system**
12. **Check channels, access permissions and working practices regularly.**

This would give staff time to become familiar with Teams and allow Ashford to make changes if something is not working.

OUR RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that Ashford Community Care Service uses Microsoft Teams for staff communication and daily updates.

Microsoft Teams can be a helpful asset to Ashford:

1. **Reducing repeated work**
2. **Communication with the staff in one single platform.**
3. **Reducing missed updates and other information.**
4. **Reduce repeated work**
5. **Improve communication between different staff groups**
6. **Support staff working in different locations**
7. **More organized daily communications**

Effective training to the staff to use Teams would enhance the productivity of the staff.

Ashford should therefore introduce Teams alongside staff training, clear communication rules, appropriate access controls and regular reviews.

Overall, Teams could provide Ashford with a simpler and more consistent way for staff to communicate while still protecting confidential information