

LCHS4007

Digital skills and Research Methods

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The background of the slide features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light teal to deep navy. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides, framing the central white area where the text is placed. The shapes include triangles and polygons of different sizes and orientations, creating a modern, layered effect.

Work efficiency - Microsoft word

- ▶ Referrals
- ▶ Create letters
- ▶ Note down medication
- ▶ Can be used for administrative purposes

Using Microsoft Word at Greenfield

- Purpose of MS Word in Greenfield Home Care**

MS Word can be used to create, store, and manage care documents such as care plans, incident reports, and staff policies.

- Why this matters**

Person-centred care relies on accurate, up-to-date documentation that all staff can understand and access easily.

- ▶ Prior to utilising Microsoft Word, employees at Greenfield might depend on handwritten notes or a combination of paper and simple digital files. Revising care plans or reports can be labour-intensive, as employees might have to rewrite or reprint materials. This method elevates the likelihood of mistakes, mislaid documents, and violations of confidentiality, since sensitive client data could be kept in filing cabinets or distributed without adequate access controls.

Current Way of Working (Before MS Word)

- Paper-based or inconsistent digital documents**

Staff may use handwritten notes or different document formats, making information hard to read or standardise.

- Time-consuming updates**

Updating care plans often requires rewriting documents or printing new copies.

- Risk of errors and data loss**

Paper files can be misplaced, damaged, or accessed by unauthorised people.

- ▶ Before using Microsoft Word, staff at Greenfield may rely on handwritten notes or a mix of paper and basic digital documents. Updating care plans or reports can be time-consuming, as staff may need to rewrite or reprint documents. This approach increases the risk of errors, lost paperwork, and breaches of confidentiality, as sensitive client information may be stored in filing cabinets or shared without proper access controls.

How Microsoft Word Improves Efficiency

- Standardised templates**

Word allows the agency to create templates for care plans, assessments, and reports, ensuring consistency across the organisation.

- Easy editing and updating**

Staff can quickly update documents without rewriting them, saving time.

- Integration with OneDrive and SharePoint**

Documents can be stored securely and accessed by authorised staff anytime, anywhere.

By enabling Greenfield to develop uniform templates for typical documents like care plans and medication records, Microsoft Word increases productivity. These templates guarantee that all employees document data in an identical manner. Additionally, Word enables rapid editing, so after visits, staff may update care information right away. Authorised personnel can view the most recent version of documents saved to OneDrive or SharePoint from many places, including clients' residences.

Benefits of Using Microsoft Word

- **Improved collaboration**

Multiple staff members (e.g. carers, nurses, coordinators) can review and edit documents using comments and track changes.

- **Better accuracy and professionalism**

Spell check, formatting tools, and clear layouts reduce errors and improve document quality.

- **Enhanced data safety**

Password protection and permission settings help keep sensitive client information secure.

By enabling care coordinators, nurses, and carers to write comments and track changes, Word facilitates teamwork and enhances communication.

Accuracy and professionalism in care documentation are enhanced by built-in capabilities like formatting features and spell check. To assist Greenfield meet data protection regulations, Microsoft Word also promotes digital safety through secure cloud storage, authorisation settings, and password protection.

Limitations of Microsoft Word

- Training required**

Some staff may lack confidence using advanced features like templates or track changes.

- Risk of version confusion**

If documents are not managed properly, staff may edit outdated versions.

- Not ideal for data analysis**

Word is best for written documentation, not for complex scheduling or data tracking.

One of Microsoft Word's main drawbacks is that employees can require training to learn how to properly utilise features like templates and collaboration tools. Staff members can alter out-of-date versions if there are unclear document management protocols in place. Additionally, Word is not appropriate for jobs like scheduling or analysing vast volumes of data, which may call for other Microsoft 365 programs like Excel. Word is meant for written documents.

Microsoft teams

What is teams?

An online communication and collaboration tool which can be used to create meetings, video call, message and to collaborate in real-time. It is either available as a 'free' version which you can download or as a group of software called 'Microsoft 365'.

(Withee 2021)



Communication

How can teams be a beneficial communication tool?

Teams has developed into a tool that enhances healthcare professions. It brings together collaboration, communication and workflow management in a secure place contributing to better long term patient care. (Afshaq, 2025)

Communication methods used with teams

- Note taking
- Video calls
- Calls
- Messaging
- Group threads
- Meetings
- Accessible files
- Digital Handover

Greenfield home care agency staff can record notes, create meetings, call, video call and send messages through teams. If a carer had an administrative query whilst out on-call, they could directly call or message office staff and exchange information, this can be especially useful whilst in different locations. Its instant access makes sharing crucial information such as medications, dosages, time and dates of administration of medication, observation results so much more efficient.

Collaboration

How does teams improve collaboration at Greenfield Carehome?

Effective patient care often needs team collaboration from different departments such as carers, pharmacists and management to name a few. Microsoft teams enables different departments to collaborate around individual patients. (Afshaq, 2025)

Collaboration tools used within teams

- Sharepoint
- Teams meetings
- Co-Authoring of documents
- Shared file storage (OneDrive)
- Can create channels for projects or dept
- Safe security measures

Collaboration tools used by teams can allow greenfield care to set up meetings that include care co-ordinators, patients, doctors and carers all to be within the same space making the patients care the core focus and allowing staff to come together to make informed decisions to enhance specific patient care. Doing this regularly for all patients will allow staff across Greencare agency to maintain up-to-date information regarding their patient and to be able to build the patient a more confident and reliable care plan which can get updated or edited with ease.

Disadvantages of Microsoft teams

What are the cons?

- Reliant on internet connection
- Staff might not be trained in the software
- Requires paid subscription for all capabilities
 - High storage consumption
 - Privacy and security issues

According to Washington (2024), a poor internet connection can be disruptive within collaborative tasks and team's meetings, making it a less reliable option for employees working remotely and for those who are in areas that have poor internet connection.

Not having strong internet connectivity can affect the use of Microsoft Teams at the care home agency quite significantly. It would not allow staff to collaborate their documents, call, video call or message as the software relies upon strong internet connection. Things such as meetings would have to be rearranged, wasting further time for staff. All use of teams would be off if there was an internet outage, thus leaving the care agency in turmoil as all documents and information is stored online. An example of it being a disadvantage is, if a carer had a booked call out but the patient does not open the door or respond, they would need to contact the administration team asap to find out why the patient hasn't answered the door and what the next steps would be i.e. missed medication?

What is digital safety?



Digital Safety is the practice of protecting devices, personal information and mental well-being from online threats. Digital safety is important because you could possibly be at risk if you use the internet without safety awareness.

There are many potential online threats online when not aware of the dangers; and there many different types of threats:

- ▶ Phishing
- ▶ Scamming
- ▶ Malware

Digital Safety



Keeping your personal information secure

SECURE ACCESS	• Software Updates Keep software updated , Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (2023), outdated software systems are more prone to exploited.	• 2-step multi factor authentication and passwords Use of unique passwords ad multi factor and authentication	• Limited access: (RBAC) Digital Agency Network (2025), explains give employees at given access based on role.	• Inactivity Devices automatically lock when a device hasn't been in use after a certain amount of time
EMAIL AWARENESS	• Phishing Gwenhure, A.K. (2025) – behaviours prone to phishing age, gender and education	• Spam filters Introduce using spam filters and navigating the reporting tool Weiss A. Study	• Improve staffs acknowledgment and solutions to threats StopThinkFraud campaign, ▪ Unusual email address ▪ Spelling and grammar mistakes	• Verification • Asking for a one time password • PIN or passcode in full • Asking for payment • Asks to click on suspicious link
DATA MANAGEMENT	• System back up Keep systems up to date and regularly back up essential systems	• Sensitivity Separate/classify data based on confidentiality or public	• Build data ownership Encourage teams and departments to take responsibility for their data assets	• Understand applicable regulations Comprehend data laws relevant to industry
CONFIDENTIALITY & COMPLIANCE	• Data encryption Encrypt data making it inaccessible to persons who aren't authorised	• Policy Create a confidentiality policy so employees know how to handle sensitive documents and data	• Physical security Implement security alarms and lock paper documents that are confidential and they can also install surveillance cameras	• Access restriction Only allow selected staff to see an access documents that are relevant to the employee and patient

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