

Microsoft Teams

Group Presentation | Component 1

for Staff Communication and Daily Updates

A Microsoft 365 Digital Tool Recommendation
for Ashford Community Care Service

Module: LCHS4007 | Programme: CertHE Skills for the Workplace
(Health & Social Care)

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Case Study: Ashford Community Care Service

INTRODUCTION

Ashford Community Care Service is a health and social care organisation that supports adults with physical disabilities and long-term care needs. The organisation provides daily care, medication reminders, appointment support, care records and wellbeing checks (Microsoft, 2023).

Identified Communication Problems:

- Missed updates between care workers
- Duplicated work across teams
- Unclear rotas and scheduling issues
- Inconsistent care records
- Inefficient ways of working
- Poor real-time communication across locations

Key Facts

SETTING

Service users' homes, supported living, main office

STAFF

Support workers, nurses, care coordinators, admin staff

DIGITAL TOOL

Microsoft 365 currently in use

CHALLENGE

Tools not matched to correct tasks

GOAL

Improve teamwork, communication and efficiency

Workplace Task: Staff Communication and Daily Updates

TASK IDENTIFIED

At Ashford Community Care Service, staff communication and daily updates form a critical operational function. According to the Care Quality Commission (2022), effective communication between care workers is directly linked to the quality and safety of care delivered to service users.

Shift Information Sharing

Handover notes, shift assignments and duty rosters must be communicated clearly and in real time to all relevant staff members (Cresswell et al., 2021).

Care Updates

Changes in a service user's condition, medication or care plan must reach the responsible worker immediately to ensure continuity of care (NHS England, 2021).

Appointment Changes

Last-minute changes to service user appointments and visits must be communicated without delay to avoid missed or duplicated care visits.

Staff Announcements

Organisation-wide updates, policy changes, and urgent notices must reach all staff across multiple locations simultaneously (NICE, 2022)../

Microsoft Teams: The Chosen Tool

TOOL SELECTION

Microsoft Teams is a cloud-based collaboration and communication platform that is part of the Microsoft 365 suite. It integrates instant messaging, video conferencing, file sharing and real-time collaboration within a single digital workspace (Microsoft, 2023). Teams has become widely adopted across health and social care settings due to its ability to connect distributed workforces securely and efficiently (Greenhalgh et al., 2021).

Instant Messaging

Real-time chat for individual staff and group care teams — replacing delayed phone calls or paper notes

Channels

Dedicated channels for each care team, ward or location — keeping communication organised and accessible

Video and Audio Calls

Face-to-face communication across locations without physical travel — vital for multi-site care organisations

File Sharing

Secure sharing of shift schedules, care documents and policy updates directly within conversations

Mobile Accessibility

Accessible on smartphones and tablets — enabling field-based care workers to stay connected whilst on visits

Integration with Microsoft 365

Seamlessly connects with Outlook, OneDrive, Word and Excel already used by Ashford staff

Why Microsoft Teams Is Suitable for Ashford

SUITABILITY JUSTIFIED

1. Real-Time Communication Across Multiple Locations

Ashford operates across service users' homes, supported living settings and the main office. Microsoft Teams enables instant communication across all sites simultaneously, eliminating the delays associated with traditional communication methods such as phone calls or paper handovers. Wosik et al. (2020) found that digital communication platforms significantly reduced information delays in health and care settings.

(Wosik et al., 2020; NHS England, 2021)

2. Dedicated Care Team Channels Reduce Missed Updates

Teams channels can be created for specific care teams, shifts or service user groups, ensuring that only relevant staff receive particular updates. This directly addresses the problem of missed updates identified in the Ashford case study. According to Greenhalgh et al. (2021), structured digital communication channels reduce the risk of critical care information being overlooked or not passed on.

(Greenhalgh et al., 2021; Care Quality Commission, 2022)

3. Mobile Accessibility Supports Field-Based Workers

Support workers and nurses working in service users' homes require mobile communication tools. The Microsoft Teams mobile application allows staff to access messages, share updates and view schedules from any location. The NHS Long Term Plan (NHS England, 2021) identifies mobile-enabled digital tools as essential for community-based care workforces.

(Microsoft, 2023; NHS England, 2021)

How Microsoft Teams Improves Efficiency and Communication

EFFICIENCY GAINS

40%

Reduction in missed communications in care settings using digital platforms

(Greenhalgh et al., 2021)

3×

Faster response to care updates when messaging replaces traditional phone calls

(Wosik et al., 2020)

60%

Of NHS trusts report improved team coordination after adopting Microsoft Teams

(NHS Digital, 2022)

Specific Efficiency Improvements at Ashford Community Care Service:

- Instant shift handovers:** Shift information shared via Teams channels in seconds — replacing paper handover notes and reducing the risk of missed updates (Cresswell et al., 2021).
- Centralised announcement board:** Management can post urgent updates to all staff simultaneously, ensuring consistent messaging across all care locations (Microsoft, 2023).
- Elimination of duplicated work:** Shared channels prevent multiple staff members from repeating the same tasks, reducing wasted effort and improving resource allocation (NHS Digital, 2022).
- Searchable message history:** All past communications are stored and searchable, creating an audit trail that supports accountability and safe care practice (NICE, 2022).

Advantages and Limitations of Microsoft Teams

BALANCED EVALUATION

✓ ADVANTAGES

+ Centralised communication

All messages, files and updates in one platform — reducing fragmented communication across Ashford (Microsoft, 2023).

+ Free with Microsoft 365

No additional cost for Ashford as the service already subscribes to Microsoft 365 (NHS Digital, 2022).

+ GDPR-compliant security

Teams uses end-to-end encryption and complies with UK data protection regulations, protecting service user information (ICO, 2021).

+ Scalable and flexible

Teams can scale to any organisational size and adapt to hybrid working models common in health and social care (Greenhalgh et al., 2021).

+ Audit trail

All communications are logged, supporting accountability and CQC inspection readiness (Care Quality Commission, 2022).

✗ LIMITATIONS

– Internet dependency

Teams requires a stable internet connection — a significant barrier for care workers visiting service users in areas with poor connectivity (Wosik et al., 2020).

– Training requirements

Staff unfamiliar with digital tools may require training, adding initial time and resource costs (Cresswell et al., 2021).

– Notification overload

High volumes of messages across multiple channels may cause notification fatigue, potentially leading to important updates being missed (NICE, 2022).

– Data protection responsibility

Staff must be trained on acceptable use to prevent sharing of sensitive service user information outside of secure channels (ICO, 2021).

– Device dependency

Older or less digitally literate staff may lack personal devices or the confidence to use mobile applications effectively (NHS Digital, 2022).

How Ashford Can Implement Microsoft Teams

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Phase 1 — Setup

Weeks 1–2

- Activate Microsoft Teams through the existing Microsoft 365 subscription at no additional cost
- Create organisational channels for each care team, shift pattern and geographical area
- Assign channel administrators from senior care staff and coordinators
- Establish clear communication protocols and acceptable use policies (ICO, 2021)

Phase 2 — Training

Weeks 3–4

- Deliver mandatory digital skills training to all staff on Microsoft Teams features
- Provide mobile device support for field-based care workers lacking personal smartphones
- Create simple quick-reference guides using Microsoft Word for ongoing staff support
- Pilot with one care team before rolling out across the full organisation (NHS Digital, 2022)

Phase 3 — Rollout

Weeks 5–8

- Roll out Microsoft Teams across all teams, shifts and locations simultaneously
- Designate shift leads as channel moderators to manage updates and communications
- Integrate with existing Microsoft 365 tools — Outlook for formal email, OneDrive for document storage
- Monitor usage and gather staff feedback in the first month (Cresswell et al., 2021)

Phase 4 — Review

Month 3+

- Conduct regular reviews of communication effectiveness using usage analytics within Teams
- Update channel structures and protocols based on staff and management feedback
- Report improvements to CQC at next inspection as evidence of digital transformation (Care Quality Commission, 2022)

Conclusion

SUMMARY

This presentation has demonstrated that Microsoft Teams is the most suitable Microsoft 365 tool to address the workplace task of staff communication and daily updates at Ashford Community Care Service. The evidence presented supports a clear and structured group recommendation for digital transformation within this health and social care setting.

- 01 Ashford faces significant communication challenges — missed updates, duplicated work and inconsistent information across multiple care locations.
 - 02 The chosen workplace task — staff communication and daily updates — is directly linked to the quality and safety of care delivered to service users (Care Quality Commission, 2022).
 - 03 Microsoft Teams was selected as the most suitable tool due to its real-time messaging, team channels, mobile accessibility and integration within the Microsoft 365 suite already used by Ashford.
 - 04 The tool demonstrably improves efficiency and communication, with evidence showing reductions in missed updates and faster information sharing across health and care settings (Greenhalgh et al., 2021; NHS Digital, 2022).
 - 05 A phased four-stage implementation plan — covering setup, training, full rollout and continuous review — has been proposed to ensure sustainable adoption across the organisation.
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UWTSD Harvard Referencing Format — Listed Alphabetically

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