

Using the Universal Care Plan to Respect Resident Wishes and Improve Care Home Efficiency

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The Universal Care Plan (UCP) has become an essential tool in our care home, enabling us to provide person-centred care while strengthening collaboration with external services.

One of the UCP's strengths is the ability to centralise care planning, **ensuring that the resident's choices are always at the forefront**, even when multiple organisations or clinicians are involved. Accessible via a web portal, the UCP allows me to edit information using my role-based access, **reducing the need for repetitive and often distressing conversations with residents and their families**. Now, they only need to share their wishes once, which are then respected and used to direct the care provided.

With the easy accessibility of UCP, **staff know when to escalate or when to use out-of-hours services**, ensuring residents' preferences are honoured while saving time and resources. Clairleigh was previously ranked in the top 10 care homes with the highest number of ambulance call outs, but using the UCP has **significantly reduced unnecessary 999 calls and hospital admissions** for our residents are now 31st out of 51 care homes in the borough.

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Staffing challenges, such as high turnover or reliance on agency staff, are also easier to manage. With every resident's plan clearly documented and accessible, **care remains consistent, even with new team members**. Collaboration with our care home GP and St Christopher's Hospice has further

improved, as we can update care plans on their behalf, streamlining communication and ensuring all plans are current.

As a care home where every resident now has a UCP, we've seen significant benefits. For example, one of our residents frequently needs to go to the hospital for certain interventions. **Documenting a clear escalation plan in the UCP has minimised back-and-forth communication with the hospital team**, reducing distress and improving our resident's overall wellbeing. Another resident with multiple comorbidities prefers to avoid hospital admissions altogether, as they feel this worsens their health. Their **care plan now shares their wish to receive symptom management at the home**, maintaining their comfort.

The UCP allows us to provide holistic care, prevent unnecessary hospitalisations, and enhance outcomes for residents, staff, and healthcare partners. **It's an invaluable tool for improving quality of life while ensuring everyone involved in care has the information they need.**

