



PRESS RELEASE

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Local people asked to donate tablets to help the most vulnerable

A local NHS organisation has put out a call for people to donate old tablets to help those living with dementia during the lockdown.

NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), who commission (buy) services on behalf of patients in Sandwell and West Birmingham, have a number of services which continue to support people living with the effects of dementia in communities during these difficult times.

During lockdown, services have had to adapt rapidly to new ways of providing care and supporting those with dementia. Part of this is providing a video calling service, allowing those living with dementia to see the faces of loved ones during this difficult time.

But as not everyone has access to a mobile tablet or the internet, the NHS in Sandwell and West Birmingham is putting out a call to businesses, organisations and members of the community for donations of used or unused mobile tablets/tablet computers.

Dr Ian Sykes, local GP and clinical chair of NHS Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG, said: “The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown has been tough on many, triggering increased levels of isolation, loneliness and vulnerability. This is especially the case for people who are living with dementia.

“Carers have been working tirelessly to support the community, despite normal activities for those with dementia being cancelled. This includes visits to day centres and seeing their family and friends face-to-face.

“Carers are under unprecedented strain, and the most vulnerable are at crisis point – but local people can really make a difference. That’s why we’re putting out a call for donations of tablets – used or unused – to help make a difference to this vulnerable group.”

Once tablets are donated, the Digital Legacy Association will help ensure that this extremely vulnerable group are able to stay connected to people who are important to them. Tablets will also allow those with dementia to access activities virtually, reducing some of the weight of the lockdown.

A team of Dementia Navigators will provide training and support to enable people living with dementia to make best use of the donated devices.

To donate a device, please contact the Dementia Navigators by emailing dementianavigators@sandwellwellcrossroads.org or call 0121 553 6483 and choose option 6.

Alternatively, you can post your tablet and accompanying accessories in a sealed plastic bag to Grenville House, New Swan Lane, West Bromwich B70 0NS

Notes to editors:

Ideally, devices should be under three years old and will take internet enabled SIM cards.

If posted, the tablet should ideally be in a sealed plastic bag with its accompanying accessories.

People can get advice on whether their tablet is suitable by emailing dementianavigators@sandwellwellcrossroads.org or calling 0121 553 6483.

For more information, contact Sophie Powers at sophie.powers2@nhs.net