Evaluation of the Virtual Engagement Rehabilitation Assistant (VERA) for community neurological rehabilitation

Staff Participant Information

Evaluation of the Virtual Engagement Rehabilitation Assistant (VERA) in the Early Supported Discharge Service within Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT) and Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (L&SCFT) Community Neurological Rehabilitation Team.

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask us if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your friends, relatives and colleagues or manager, if you wish. We would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.

Thank you for reading this.

Who is the sponsor organisation for this study?

The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) is sponsoring the study. Any reference to 'we' in this information sheet refers to the sponsor.

What is the purpose of the study?

You may already be aware that a first prototype Virtual Engagement Rehabilitation Assistant (VERA) has been trialled on the Complex Rehabilitation Unit (CRU) at The Walton Centre.

VERA is a digital technology which enables portable devices, such as tablets, to access a range of applications (apps) and web-based resources. In this study VERA is housed on an iPad. We are calling this a **VERA Unit**. It will enable service users (patients) to interact with a range of digital resources tailored to their own rehabilitation goals, including timetables and appointments, videos of exercises

and activities, reminders, well-being questionnaires, games and links to other relevant resources and information.

This study aims to evaluate the process and outcomes of placing the VERA digital technology in a community setting. We intend to explore the adoption of the technology by both service users and staff. We aim to identify the impact of the VERA training packages, how and when VERA was used, perceptions of the benefits and disbenefits of VERA, and any barriers or enablers for using VERA in the community setting.

The evaluation is being carried out by researchers from UCLan.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to take part in this study as you are a member of the medical, nursing or allied health professional staff in the Early Supported Discharge Service within Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT) or the Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (L&SCFT) Community Neurological Rehabilitation Team, and have worked in a support role with service users using VERA in the past 6 weeks. If you work for more than 7 hours a week with these service users, then we would like to invite you to take part in the evaluation.

In this study, we aim to recruit up to 20 staff who work in one of these two teams.

Up to 20 service users will also take part in the evaluation.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in the evaluation is completely voluntary for all staff. You do not have to take part, and are free to decline the invitations without any disadvantages or negative consequences from your employer or the UCLan researchers.

What will happen if I take part?

You will be asked to complete a consent process. This will be through a secure online form.

If you decide to take part, you will be provided with a participant information number (PIN) which will link your contributions to the evaluation, while keeping your data confidential.

Participating in the study will involve providing some demographic information about yourself, and completing an online questionnaire about the staff training package for VERA. You will also be invited to a Focus Group Discussion to share your experiences of implementing VERA.

It is anticipated that the acceptability and usability of VERA may be affected by the characteristics and beliefs of both the staff and service user participants. This is why your demographic information will be collected. This information will be analysed for patterns in adoption of VERA. If you would prefer not to supply this demographic information, which is required for our analysis, then you will not be able to participate in the evaluation.

The demographic information collected will be: 1) age; 2) gender; 3) ethnicity; 4) self-perceived assessment of high / low technology use; 5) profession and band / grade; 6) length of time working in rehabilitation; 7) length of time working in the community neurological rehabilitation team. This data will be collected via a self-completed secure online Demographic Information Form. The link will be sent by email by a UCLan researcher.

After you have completed the training package for VERA, an online Training Questionnaire will collect your views about the training package, the learning that has taken place, and its effectiveness.

We are also arranging two Focus Group Discussions (one for each staff team). Each session will last for up to 90 minutes and will be held at a time identified by the staff team as most convenient to them. There will be a maximum of 10 participants in each team Focus Group Discussion.

In the Focus Group Discussions, staff can speak freely to share their experiences. We will explore the usability, acceptability, barriers, facilitators, and benefits and disbenefits of VERA. The Focus Group Discussions will also explore the impact of the training, particularly in relation to any perceived changes in behaviour and outcomes for both staff and service users. Discussion will be facilitated by UCLan researchers.

It is anticipated that the Focus Group Discussions will be conducted online through Microsoft Teams, using video recording, to facilitate staff attendance from any location. Online groups are carried out in accordance with UCLan's Remote Research Guidelines. If sessions are conducted face-to-face, they will be at team premises and recorded on an encrypted digital audio-recorder supplied by UCLan. All recordings will be stored in UCLan's secure OneDrive, along with any field notes made during the Focus Group Discussions The confidentiality of your data will be protected by using your PIN. Details of data protection are given below.

Your participation in the study, from consent to completion of focus group, will not be longer than 16 weeks.

How will we use information about you?

We will need to use information that you give us for this research project.

This information is described in detail on page 3 (above).

People will use this information to do the research or to check that the research is being done properly. People who do not need to know who you are will not be able to see your name or contact details. Your data will have a code (PIN) number instead.

We will keep all information about you safe and secure by:

- storing information on secure computer systems
- ensuring only those who should see the information do see it
- anonymising your information at the earliest opportunity

Your data will not be shared outside the UK.

We will keep your study data for a maximum of 7 years. The study data will then be fully anonymized and securely archived or destroyed.

What are your choices about how your information is used?

- You can stop being part of the study at any time, without giving a reason, but we will keep information about you that we already have. There will not be any negative consequences or disadvantages to you if you do change your mind about taking part.

- If you do take part in a Focus Group Discussion, you are free to leave the group at any point while the discussion is taking place. However, you should be aware that it would not be possible to withdraw any data you have contributed to the Focus Group Discussion.

- If you agree to take part in this study, you will have the option to take part in future research using your data saved from this study.

Where can you find out more about how your information is used?

You can find out more about how we use your information

- leaflet available from www.hra.nhs.uk/patientdataandresearch
- by asking one of the research team
- by sending an email to KJarvis1@uclan.ac.uk, who will direct you to the Sponsor's Data Protection Officer if this is appropriate

Are there any risks in taking part?

We do not anticipate that there are any direct risks to you from taking part. However, the evaluation of VERA may take time that you would otherwise spend undertaking other duties which may create a time management burden for you. You should also be aware that in the unlikely event that a staff participant in the Focus Group Discussions was to report unprofessional practice, there would be an obligation to report this to the service management for further investigation.

Are there any benefits from taking part?

There are no direct benefits to you from taking part in this study. However, we hope that sharing and comparing experiences with colleagues also involved in the implementation of VERA will be a positive experience for the participants.

Expenses and / or payments

There will be no expenses incurred or payments made for taking part in the evaluation.

What will happen to the results of the study?

On completion of the study an Executive Summary will be prepared for the organisations involved in the study (The Walton Centre, Early Supported Discharge Service within Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LUHFT), Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (L&SCFT) Community Neurological Rehabilitation Team, Citrus Suite and UCLan).

The Executive Summary will be available on the VERA website, which can be accessed at https://veratechnology.myportfolio.com for those who are interested. All efforts will also be made to publish the findings from this study in a peer-reviewed journal. Details will be reported on the VERA website as they become available.

What do I do if I want to take part in this evaluation?

If you would like to take part in this evaluation, please contact:

Dr Julie Cook by emailing jcook11@uclan.ac.uk

What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

This study has been given a favourable opinion by the North-West Preston NHS Ethics Committee and the Health Ethics Panel at the University of Central Lancashire (Health 001184) and approved by the Health Research Authority (IRAS 330807).

If you are unhappy, or if there is a problem, please feel free to let us know by contacting Dr Kathryn Jarvis, kjarvis1@uclan.ac.uk and we will try to help. If you remain unhappy, or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with, then please contact the Research Governance Unit at OfficerForEthics@uclan.ac.uk.

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of rigour in the processing of your data. However, if you have any concerns about the way in which the University processes your personal data, it is important that you are aware of your right to lodge a complaint with the university Information Governance and Data Protection Officer by emailing DPFOIA@uclan.ac.uk or calling 01772 892561.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

Dr Kathryn Jarvis, Senior Research Fellow, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Central Lancashire, Preston. PR1 2HE. Tel: 01772 892782, kjarvis1@uclan.ac.uk

Dr Julie Cook, Senior Research Fellow, Applied Health Research Hub, University of Central Lancashire, Preston. PR1 2HE. Jcook11@uclan.ac.uk

The above people can be contacted at any point during your participation in the study.