

Press Release 04.05.17

Northampton Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust release paper outlining positive feedback from using body cameras in inpatient setting

Body cameras in mental health

Body worn cameras (BWCs) have long been proven to deescalate situations and provide an independent account of incidents in law enforcement. But can they make a difference in an inpatient setting?

According to official NHS figures, there were 70,555 recorded incidents in 2016 – which equates to about 193 assaults on NHS doctors, nurses and paramedics every day in England.

While the employment of BWCs has been judged to be useful by both nursing staff and patients in the past, no report on their feasibility or effectiveness had been published to date.

Under the aegis of their Innovation Research department and with support from [Calla](#) (BWC supplier), researchers and clinicians from the [Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust](#) (NHFT) conducted a project to examine the feasibility of using body worn cameras in an inpatient mental health setting.

This pioneering pilot project using BWCs took place at Berrywood Hospital, which is a psychiatric facility in Northampton, England run by the NHFT. Body cameras were worn by the Prevention and Management of Violence and Aggression team and nursing staff on five psychiatric inpatient wards over a period of 3 months.



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Results

In the paper published today in the *Mental Health in Family Medicine journal*, the team from NHFT shared the results of the project.

The project investigated the experience of staff using BWCs, practical issues faced, their perceptions of its usefulness and the acceptability of staff wearing cameras to patients.

Some of the staff feedback from the study included comments such as –

“I think it prevents lots of aggression and puts patients’ minds at ease knowing there is a record of what happened.”

“I have seen a few occasions where the incident had deescalated and believe this to have been helped by the camera being turned on.”

“I am fully in support of the technology being used permanently in the future.”

“I can see nothing but positives from it with recourse to its potential in reducing/deescalating violent incidents.”



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“Initially sceptical, however can see that body worn cameras have had a positive impact on both patients and staff.”

The study reported that in the course of its focus groups, examples were given by staff where they felt the use of BWCs may have changed behaviour such as when a female patient kicking a door stopped when was told she was being filmed or a gentleman who had a habit of hitting staff stopped when the cameras were on.

Patients themselves described what they considered were the benefits of staff wearing BWCs which included: *‘better treatment for patients, respect for staff, accurate recording and clarifying situations in the face of possible unjust accusations.’*

The study also found that the level of violent incidents and instances of use of emergency restraints reduced on three of the wards as compared to the same time last year. There were also no complaints regarding restraints during the pilot period of BWCs compared to two, in the same period a year earlier.

Most staff involved in the pilot were very positive about the benefits of wearing BWCs. The paper concluded that it had demonstrated the feasibility of employing body worn cameras in

an inpatient mental health setting and evidenced that their use was acceptable and welcomed by both patients and staff. Costs could also be offset by the reductions in complaints, incidents and restraints. Berrywood Hospital will continue to use BWCs in their mental health wards and look at potential wider roll outs.

Quotes

Dr. Alex O’Neill-Kerr – Clinical Medical Director, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

“Improving patient and staff safety, coupled with improving the quality of care afforded are key priorities for us and we are always striving to find innovative ways to achieve those objectives. As this study has proven, body worn cameras could play an integral role in accomplishing those goals.”

Alasdair Field, CEO – Calla

“Having seen the results this technology brings in calming volatile situations, we are further encouraged by the results published in this study. We strongly believe the use of body worn cameras can only improve transparency and accountability, which in turn enhances trust and the relationship between patients and nursing staff.”

About Calla

Calla is technology developed by Reveal – the very first body worn video system provider in the UK. For nearly a decade, Reveal has worked extensively with police forces around the world, providing award winning body cameras and evidence management software.

Our customers’ experience in the field has taught us that the presence of a body camera in itself can deescalate potentially tense situations. Also when people see

themselves being recorded, they tend to calm themselves down. But if a situation does escalate, the user has the confidence that there is a full recording of the incident showing the true account of events.

But it's not just law enforcement who face situations where body cameras can make a difference. And this is why we're bringing *Calla* to the market.

Calla is a small, secure body camera with a front facing screen and cloud based video management software service.

Nurses are regularly in situations where they face disruption or aggression. We wanted to create a body camera that would be suitable for this environment but afford the same features of security and ease of use.

For some, these unwanted situations are beginning to affect their ability to get on with the job and are in turn negatively affecting their experience at work. With *Calla*, we want to empower people to no longer worry about these situations so that they can focus on what they love – nursing.

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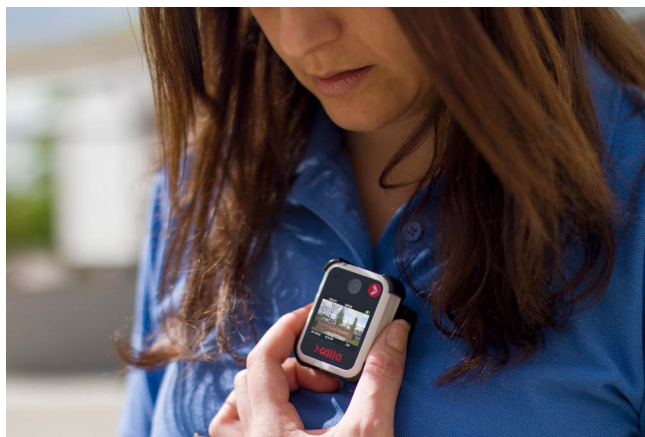
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