

Care Home Social Media

Keeping in touch & staying connected

Care Homes closed their door to visitors to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spreading to residents and staff. Residents and their relatives and friends were suddenly disconnected and unable to see each other.

We are motivated to work with our care home community and health and care system to better understand the impact this had and what support is needed going forward. We start this with shining a spotlight on some of the good practice we found.

Three students supported us by searching, viewing and commenting on how local homes were using social media to support residents and their relatives and friends to stay connected, when they could not physically visit each other.

This short document outlines some of the things our volunteers observed and found.

So we could share good practice in a timely way, our volunteer auditors looked at the use of social media in a third of care homes in West Sussex (80 in total).



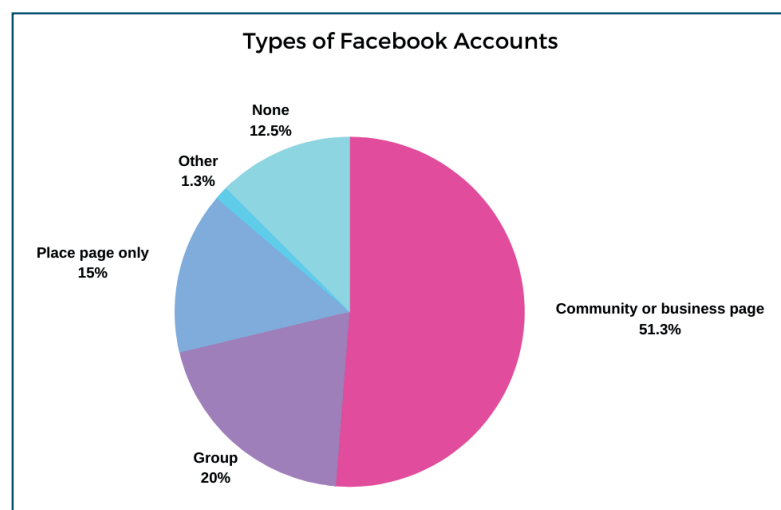
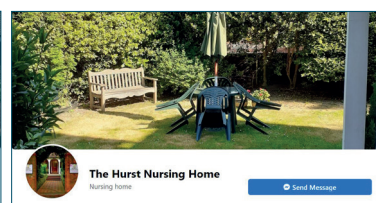
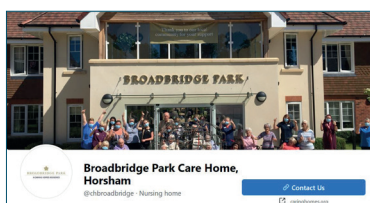
Our volunteers looked online to see what social media the care homes were using, and which channels had the most activity.

Out of the social media channels, we found the care homes used Facebook a lot more than the others, so we focused the rest of the research on Facebook.

The team looked on Facebook to look at the type of account the care homes had, the frequency of activity and the quality/style of the content.

Here is a summary of some of their comments and findings

Of the **80** care homes we searched for, **49** had some sort of profile and/or account.



41 Care homes had a community or business page.

16 Were set up as 'groups'.

12 Had place pages only (where other posts have referenced the service or 'checked in' but where there is no actual detail).

1 Had been set up as a 'person' account (which may have been an error and has not been updated or used at all). Shown as 'other' on graph.

- 18 of the groups and pages had some lovely engaging posts with images and details of resident activities, social events and personal stories.
- Of the pages and groups, only 4 services have set them up as PRIVATE.
- 5 of the pages/groups are very out of date and are not maintained or used. The last post/activity on the pages as far back as 10 years ago.
- We found that 2 pages were set up relatively recently - since the COVID pandemic. One was set up in March, the other in June 2020.
- 4 of the groups and pages are focussed on staff - mainly sharing recruitment posts and information/communication about shifts.
- 4 of the groups and pages had a commercial focus - sharing marketing information, prices and what they offer. We believe marketing is also about balancing image with day-to-day living and showcasing activities.

Our team identified 8 pages as particularly good as they were engaging, up to date and contained lots of resident activity images and information - enabling the person looking at the page to really feel involved and included in the home's activities and the lives of residents.

5 of the pages and groups mentioned community links, thank you's and fundraising - either for external charities, community partners or for themselves.

Our team were surprised that one service posted lots of lovely pictures and personal stories about resident activities, but blurred out the faces of all the residents. We understand that this may be to protect the privacy of the resident. However, they could set this up as a staff and family only private group instead of a public page.



All screenshots taken from public Facebook pages

What your home can do?

- Share your communication successes with us - we can showcase good practice.
- Encourage activity staff, or promote this as an opportunity to your staff team, to become your 'Social Media Champion' - setting-up and posting to a private &/or public Facebook group, where residents, relatives and friends can see and interact with what is going on in the home.
- Have 'Keeping in touch & Staying Connected' as a regular staff meeting agenda item and invite family and friend carers to share ideas and thoughts, so they can come up with solutions and ideas together.