

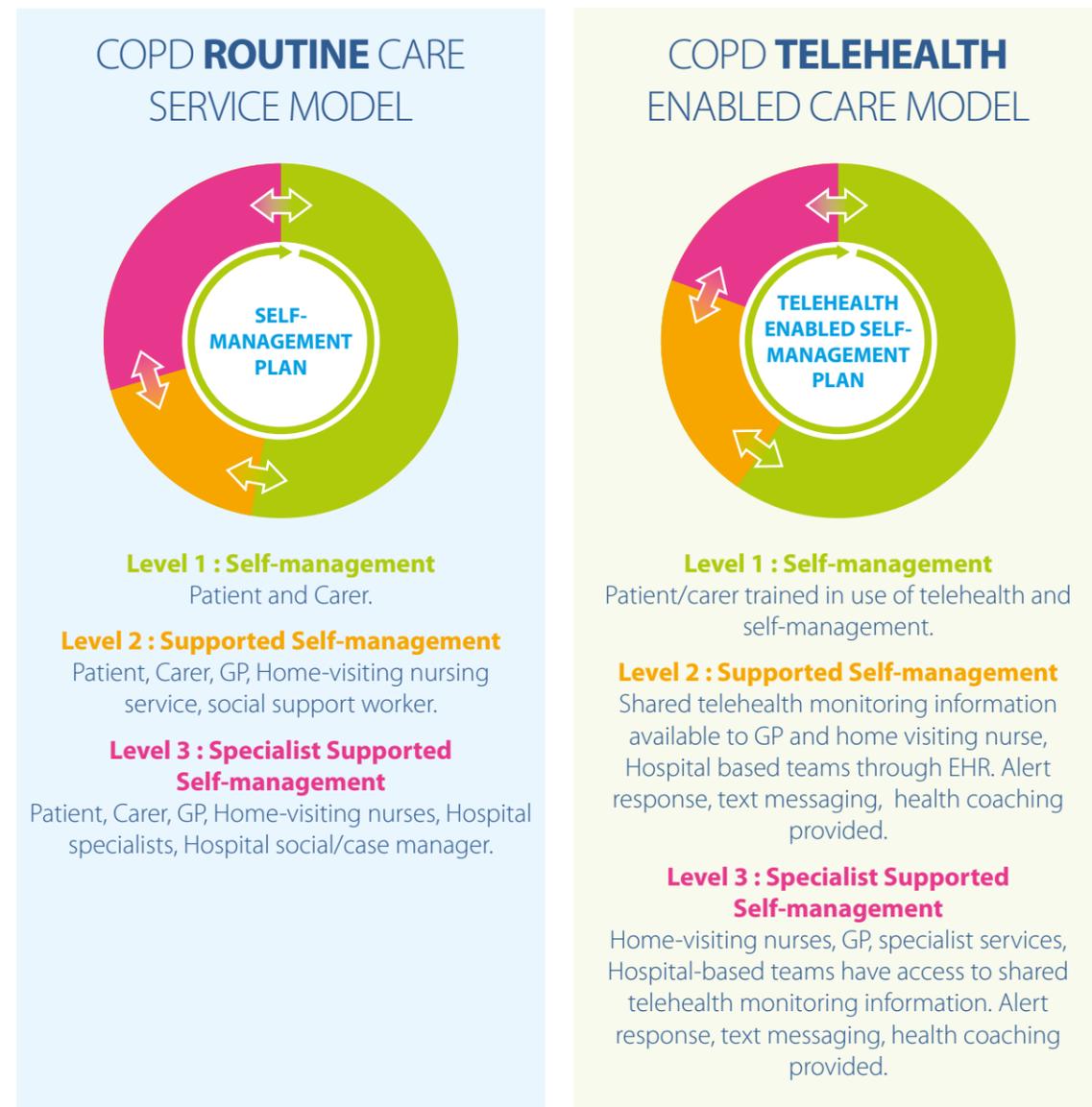
Telehealth in Practice

Pflegewerk, Berlin, Germany - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

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Ambition

The overall aim for implementing telehealth into the care management programme for patients living with COPD who monitor their own or have help in monitoring their vital signs in the Berlin deployment site, is to reduce their risk of having an exacerbation of their COPD resulting in a hospital admission.



COPD Care Management – routine care

The provision of COPD services in Berlin comprises various settings. United4Health has included the Pflegewerk healthcare provider which delivers the COPD disease management programme (DMP) as part of its integrated care contract with health insurance companies. Some patients live in their own home or flat fully independently, take their measurements on their own and are visited by the nurse as needed (Green). Others live in their own home and are visited regularly, but still take the measurements independently (Green). Some patients involved in U4H lived in assisted living units that belong to Pflegewerk, where they are assisted to take measurements regularly (Amber), but they still conduct a fairly independent lifestyle, with community rooms where they eat, chat, play cards, watch TV and conduct social life all together. Those patients most in need live in nursing homes, where they are supervised 24/7 and nurses take the measurements and provide the necessary care (Amber).

The DMP, following clinical practice guidelines published by various national and international COPD agencies, is delivered by a wide range of professionals including GPs, consultants, specialist COPD teams as well as other primary and secondary care professionals.

Pflegewerk are contracted to provide regular face-to-face visits to the patient's home by GPs or specialist doctors and nurses. During these visits, the patient's health and wellbeing is reviewed and their care plan and self-management plan adjusted accordingly.

Patients receive specialist COPD care when they attend the emergency department or have an emergency admission to hospital (Pink).

U4H Telehealth Enabled COPD Care Management

Berlin provides life-long monitoring services for patients living with COPD. Patients either take their own blood pressure and pulse, peak flow using a spirometer and blood oxygen with a pulse oximeter daily, are assisted in using their telehealth or have their measurements taken for them by a nurse. The system uses Bluetooth technology to transmit the readings to a Smartphone which then uploads the data to a central database as well as into the electronic Patient Health Record (PHR). The telehealth system generates alerts if measurements are outside the patient's personalised parameters and according to the service protocol. The alerts are sent to one or more people, such as doctor, care home nurse, family member, patient themselves, or other person explicitly authorised by the patient in order for appropriate action and/or response to be taken. These authorised members of the patient's care team can access the PHR to gain further information on the health status of the patient. Remote contacts with the patients are by telephone.

Pflegewerk have plans to integrate the telehealth data into the patient management software and the nationwide infrastructure, supporting eg electronic case records, in Germany.

