

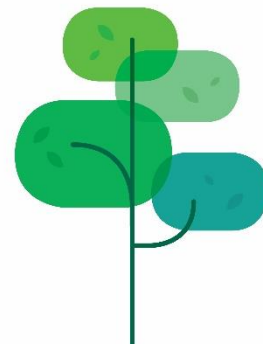
OPAT and virtual wards

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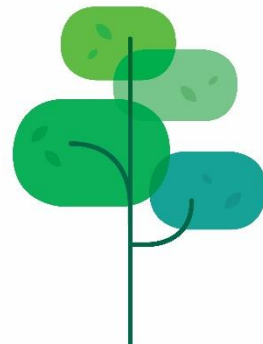
Inspected and rated

Good



Definitions

- OPAT
 - The administration of parenteral antimicrobial therapy without an overnight hospital stay
 - Difficult to define OPAT accurately. No common definition.
 - Extends to complex oral regimens.



Definitions

- Virtual ward

virtual ward

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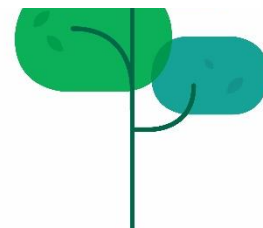
A virtual ward is a safe and efficient **alternative to NHS bedded care**.

Virtual wards support patients who would **otherwise be in hospital** to receive the acute care and treatment they need in their own home.

This includes either **preventing avoidable admissions** into hospital, or **supporting early discharge** out of hospital.

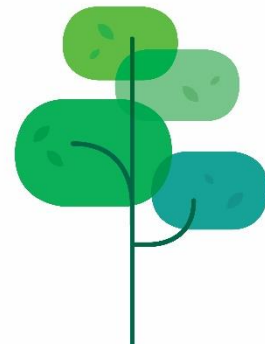
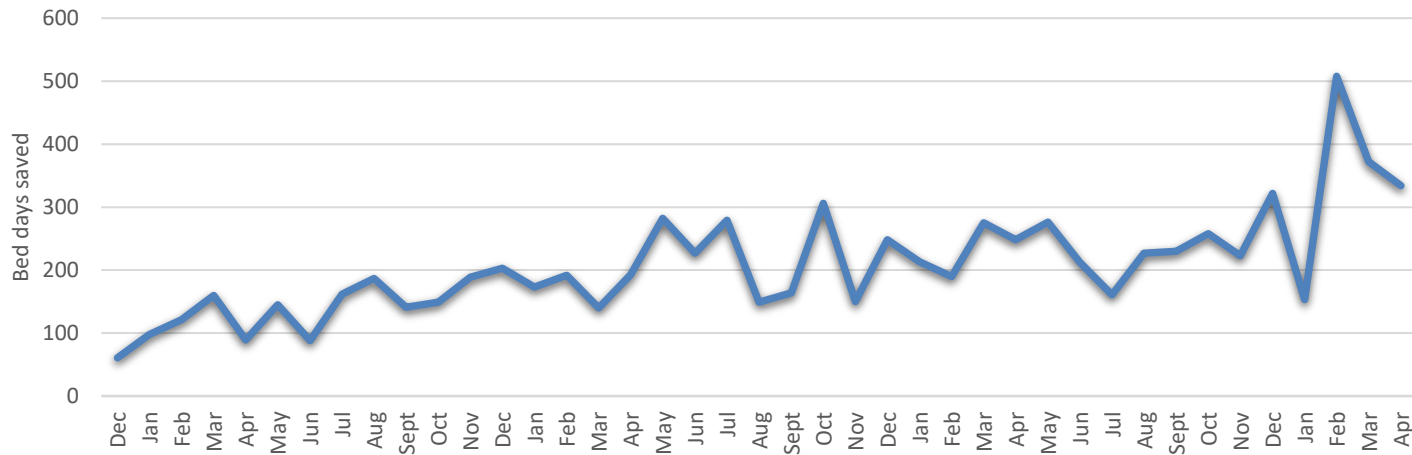
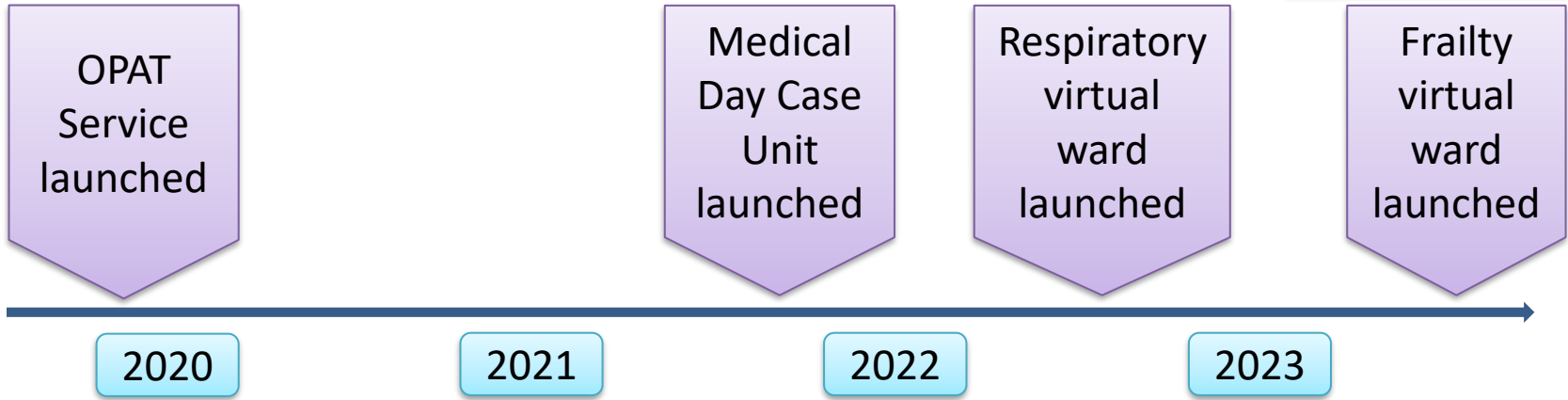
A virtual ward enabled by technology consists of (as a minimum):

- ✓ The ability for **patients to measure and input agreed health data** - for example vital signs - **into an app or website** (this may also be done automatically for example with wearable/Bluetooth technology).
- ✓ This data feeds into a **digital platform / dashboard** which is **reviewed remotely** by a clinical team.
- ✓ The clinical team are alerted when a **patient moves outside of agreed parameters** so they can **take appropriate and timely action**.

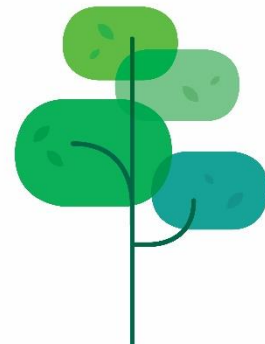
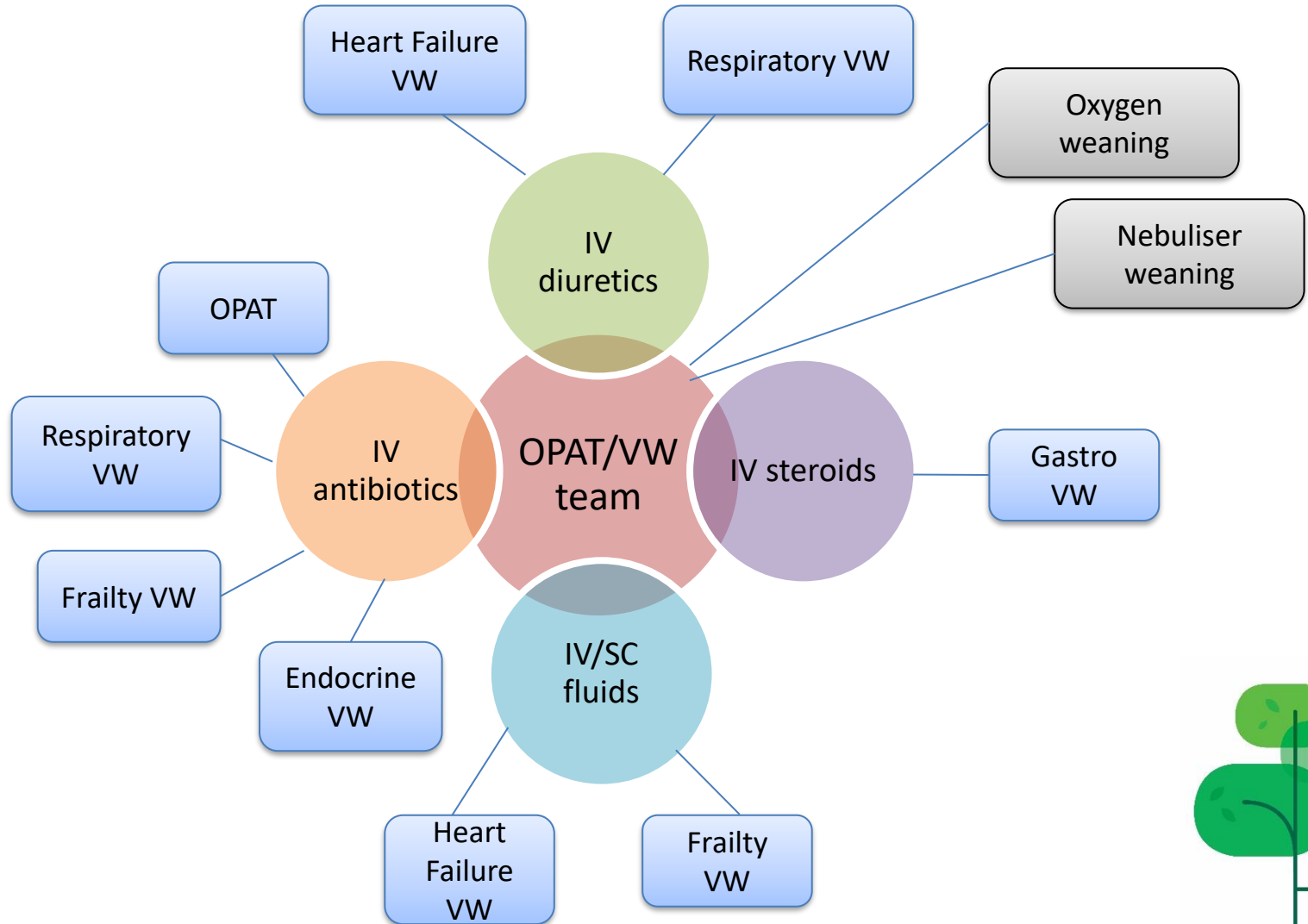


Our story

OPAT included in virtual ward numbers



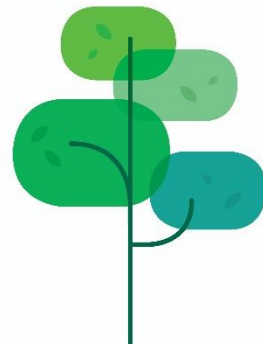
IV Therapy at Home Service



	OPAT	Virtual wards
Facilitates early discharge or admission avoidance	✓	✓
Level of acuity and complexity of patients	Medically stable enough to not be an inpatient. ↑ in complexity & co-morbidities of patients and complexity of infections being treated	The acuity and complexity of the patient's condition which differentiates virtual ward from other home-based services
Duration of admission	Unlimited	1-14 days
Enabled by technology		✓
Skilled multi-professional workforce	✓	✓
Good practice recommendations	✓	Resources and guidance
Robust governance structure	✓	✓
Where is care delivered	Variety of settings	Patient's home (or place they call home)
Standardised data collection	✓ (not collected nationally)	✓ (no clinical outcomes)
Functions within local antimicrobial stewardship programmes	✓	?

Other considerations

- An extrapolation of the OPAT team's role (and community based nursing teams).
- Increased pressure on the antibiotic ready to administer supply chain.
- Increased pressure on vascular access services.
- Funding for OPAT becomes linked to virtual wards.
- OPAT vs virtual ward data recording.



References

- Ann L N Chapman *et al*, Updated good practice recommendations for outpatient parenteral antimicrobial therapy (OPAT) in adults and children in the UK, *JAC-Antimicrobial Resistance*, Volume 1, Issue 2, September 2019, dlz026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jacamr/dlz026>
- Future NHS Virtual Wards Network, <https://future.nhs.uk/>
- NHS England Virtual Wards, Resources, guidance and networks, [NHS England » Resources, guidance and networks](#)

