

# Geriatric patients in virtual wards; technology adoption style, ease of use, and adherence to remote monitoring technology

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## Introduction

NHS England is committed to the expansion of virtual wards, necessitating patient engagement with home care technology.

Literature suggests there is a technology adoption lag among older populations. We investigated if this lag was evident in geriatric virtual ward patients.

## Methods

Data from three NHS trusts using a virtual care platform (March 2021-August 2023) were aggregated to assess differences in perceived ease of use, technology adoption style, and measures of adherence.

All patients received the Telehealth Usability Questionnaire Ease of Use (EOU) subsection (higher scores indicate higher EOU). Patients completed surveys via tablet, wore monitoring devices, and took blood pressure readings. We dichotomized age (<75 vs. 75+) and used Fisher's exact and Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests.

## Results

	Geriatric (75+ years)	Younger (<75 years)
<b>Sample size</b>	316	541
<b>Mean age</b>	81.5 years	59.1 years
<b>Female</b>	49%	51%
<b>Median EOU score***</b>	5.5	6.2
<b>Avoid/delay tech adoption***</b>	82%	56%
<b>Median adherence (IQR)</b>		
<b>Wearable device***</b>	95% (91-98%)	93% (88-97%)
<b>Blood pressure</b>	80% (67-91%)	83% (70-92%)
<b>Surveys</b>	87% (64-100%)	82% (60-97%)

\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001

## Conclusions

Despite perceptions and literature suggesting older patients are less comfortable with technology, our findings demonstrate high engagement in virtual ward technology. While differences exist in technology adoption and EOU scores, geriatric patients exhibit equal or higher adherence to remote monitoring tasks. These results challenge stereotypes and underscore the importance of incorporating technology in geriatric care.



## Author Provenance

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