

A photograph of a male healthcare professional in blue scrubs and a white t-shirt, smiling and pointing at a tablet held by an elderly woman with white hair. They are in a bright, modern setting, possibly a care facility. The background shows a white brick wall and a white shelf with some items.

ABENA®

Leverage the potential of digital continence care

MANAGEMENT

Explore the added value of digital continence care for managers of care facilities and nursing homes

WHITEPAPER - 2020

Leverage the potential of digital continence care

AUTHOR

Dag Winther Svendsen, Global Concept Manager, ABENA Nova

Continence care is an essential part of the daily care practices in nursing homes and specialty care institutions. At a time with an increasing number of elderly people and a decreasing number of caregivers, we have to ask ourselves how we can maintain and improve the standards of continence care.

Digitalization is one of the answers. While the trend of using digital solutions in our daily lives is snowballing, it is also gaining momentum in the care sector. Digital continence care is emerging as one of the areas with vast potential for residents, caregivers and institution management in terms of improved quality of life for residents, improved working conditions for caregivers, and savings on cost.

This paper explores the opportunities, challenges and potentials of digital continence care from a management point of view, based on the experiences from several European nursing homes and specialty care institutions that have tested the digital incontinence solution ABENA Nova with MediSens.

The added value of digital continence care

Digital continence care supports a personalized approach, putting the individual resident center-stage and offering new opportunities to improve quality of life. However, transformation requires changing habits and mindsets in continence care. The impact of digital continence care is profound and has the potential bring about lasting, positive changes to daily practices, staff satisfaction, and happiness among residents and their relatives.

The real-time data provided by the products allows timely action in continence care. In addition, the automatic capture of data related to the individual resident may lead to changes of routines and improved planning of the continence care.

Digital continence care empowers the staff to act on real-time information. Fixed changing schedules can be replaced by a personal, 'on-demand' approach to continence care. The responsibility is handed back to the staff performing the actual care, allowing them to make and

carry out the best solution in their daily work in caring for the resident.

In addition, the digital products open new perspectives and pave the way for important discussions among the staff on good continence care. This may ultimately lead to continuous improvements and improved work satisfaction.



Unique results have been demonstrated through case studies*

39 minutes saved time per user/day

57% reduction in leakages

84% reduction in manual checks

28% reduction in number of changes

**The digital incontinence product ABENA Nova with MediSens has been tested at nursing homes and specialty care institutions in the Netherlands, UK, Germany, Norway, Sweden, USA, and Denmark. The figures above are average results from these case studies.*



Average results from case studies, Europe 2018-19

“Continence care is hard work and takes up a lot of resources. Implementing ABENA Nova with MediSens showed that we could truly relieve the physical strain and reduce the level of stress during day and night shifts without compromising the principles of good continence care. We know that our staff comes to work every day with one wish, and that is to improve the quality of life of their patients. The new digital product enables them to do just that.”

Tobias Fundis, Managing Director of the nursing home Seniorenstift Eppingen GmbH & Co.



Benefits of digital continence care at a glance

For residents: Dignity and improved quality of life

- A good night's sleep, dry and comfortable
- Fewer leakages, less manual checks, no bad odor
- Improved skin health and less UTIs
- Less stressful changes of clothing or bedding

For caregivers: Less physical strain and more time for quality care

- Better planning, less stress and fewer leakage episodes
- Extra time for meaningful care activities
- Ease physical workload, less physical strain, less heavy lifts

For management: High quality care, improved patient and staff satisfaction, and substantial savings

- Happy residents and relatives
- Motivated staff with extra time for care-giving
- Less sick leave absence due to stress and work-related injuries among staff
- Savings on time spent on continence care, fewer continence products, less laundry and waste

Secure staff and good working conditions

In a time where the war for talent is raging in the care sector, increased empowerment of the individual caregiver and improved work environment is crucial to attracting and retaining the right personnel. Digital solutions relieve the workload and resound among new generations of caregivers.

For new and current staff, the significant time savings achieved through digital continence care provide welcome extra hours in the daily work. In addition an open-minded effort involving all relevant parties in exploring digital continence practices provides room for innovative and meaningful perspectives to routine care tasks.

A more sustainable choice

The effects of digital continence care on sustainability are considerable. In nursing homes and specialty care institutions, a large part of the waste flow consists of incontinence products. Extensive testing at nursing homes and specialty care institutions in several countries has shown that the number of incontinence products is reduced by on average 40% when implementing digital products. Furthermore, the drastic reduction of leakages saves water and detergents for laundry.

Getting a good start with digital continence care

The decision to venture into digital solutions requires an open mind and a willingness to challenge status quo at all levels in the organization. Thorough testing of digital continence care at several care institutions have resulted in the following recommendations for successful implementation:

Allow time for implementation: Digital continence care challenges known practices and calls for new routines. Allow time for discussions among care staff to take in the changes and learn to work in new ways.

Communication is key: Never underestimate the importance of communication before, during, and after implementation to create a smooth implementation process.

Phase in the new technology: Start with a smaller group of 10-20 residents, in order to gain experience. Then scale up to include more residents.

Appoint ambassadors and super users: It is important to have people in the organization who really understand and appreciate the opportunities and can lead the development; preferably people who can make the link between technology and care practices.

ABENA Nova uses a unique wireless connection to digital sensors to deliver actionable insights to caregivers. The sensors in the continence product continuously register changes in wetness levels and share real-time information to caregivers on a mobile device via the WetSens Monitor app.



Training is required: Digital solutions require new knowledge and understanding of how the technology works. Train-the-trainer concepts can be applied when the digital solution is scaled up.

Make sure that the digital infrastructure is in place: Malfunctioning technology creates frustrations. Make sure to have connections in place that meet the requirements of the digital continence solution. ABENA Nova is run by its own 4G infrastructure that is not dependent on WiFi.

No one-size fits all: Some departments will be front-runners and embrace the digital possibilities. Others will be a bit more reluctant and value well-known routines. It is important to pay attention to these different positions and attitudes during implementation, and make sure to get everybody on board at their own pace.

Easy to get started

ABENA Nova with MediSens is an easy to implement, plug-and-play solution. All it takes is 1-2 hours of introduction to the system and the practical usage of the solution. The time-consuming and difficult part is getting used to new ways of working and changed routines in daily continence care.

Facts about ABENA Nova

ABENA Nova is the first and leading digital continence solution providing real-time and actionable data for timely and personalized continence care.

The incontinence product has integrated sensors and a separate personal clip that constantly measures the degree of saturation. The clip sends information to the WetSens Monitor app, allowing caregivers to take timely action when it is time for a change.

Information about incontinence patterns are collected and can be used to optimize care tasks. For the management, the WetSens platform contains valuable insights into the use of incontinence products, peak loads in departments and response times to continuously make sure that residents receive the right care at all times.

Safety, privacy and security

ABENA Nova with MediSens is CE marked, classified as an electronic medical device class 1, and compliant with MDD (MDR as of May 2021). It follows the same radiation tests as other low energy, Bluetooth devices as for instance fitness tracking devices, cell phones and loud speakers.

ABENA Nova is designed with the highest standards for data security to create a resilient IT architecture from resident to cloud. ABENA Nova complies with all regulatory requirements, notably EU's GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

In daily use of ABENA Nova with MediSens, data privacy is maintained in the following ways:

1. Within the four walls of the care institution, data is personalized and can be used to ensure best possible care of specific residents. Data security is the responsibility of the care institution.
2. Data transmission to the cloud takes place via secure, encrypted lines. Only anonymous data is transmitted with no referral to specific residents.
3. In the cloud, all data stored is anonymous and cannot in any way be associated with specific residents. ABENA's servers are run and protected by external service partners, specialized in data warehousing and data security.
4. We apply credentials for access control and run user activity logging to monitor security.

If you want to know more about the benefits of good continence care, you will find more information in our papers on digital continence care from the perspective of caregivers and residents.

This whitepaper is for informational purposes only. The know-how and practices presented in this paper are not exhaustive and can never substitute medical advice. Each user is responsible for independently evaluating his or her particular use of the know-how and practices provided in this paper.