



Top Tips for Tricky Times: Helping care home residents with dementia to use video to communicate with their families



- 1) **Image and sound:** Using video (e.g. Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WhatsApp) can work well. It helps residents with dementia to connect with family – the extra clues of body language help the conversation.



- 2) **Reducing isolation:** It can help residents feel more connected, less lonely.



- 3) **Support and timing:** Residents will need support to use the technology. You may not have enough time to do this – allocate staff set times to support different residents.



- 4) **A cover** on tablets makes them easier to hold and clean.



- 5) **Environment:** Adjust light (curtains, electric light) to reduce glare on screen.



- 6) **Presentation:** Ask family member *before* the call to have light on their face (not behind) for a clear image.



- 7) **Sound:** Turn on the loudspeaker to make it easier to hear.



- 8) **Anticipate technical problems:** Inevitable glitches (sound /video freezing) can raise stress levels. Plan for times when the resident will be calmer and not tired.



- 9) **Note** how residents are after the call and if they seem happy or more distressed/confused. Not all residents will like the experience. Include comments in their care plan.



- 10) **Remember:** Some relatives may not want to do this as they find it too emotional.