

# BEHIND THE SCREEN

EXPLORING VIRTUAL WARDS  
THROUGH DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

This resource offers an in-depth exploration of the shift in healthcare delivery as some services move online, considering the experiences and insights of people from four diverse community groups from Greater Manchester. First, you will experience two extracts from an audio story where you will meet two characters, Ruby & Dennis. These extracts will help you foster a deeper connection with Ruby & Dennis, before they experience a virtual ward. This is followed by three audio insight packages exploring the impact of virtual wards, featuring the perspectives of individuals from the Polish community, individuals from the Chinese community (both groups via the Wai Yin Society in Manchester), South Asian women (via Awakening Minds in Rochdale), and men aged 60 and over (via Salford Community Walking Football Club). The resource closes with a final extract of the audio story.

## What is a virtual ward?



Virtual wards allow patients to be monitored and supported at home through technology instead of staying in the hospital.

Watch this [short video explainer](#).

## Introducing the story

In order to gain valuable insight from the four community groups, we delivered an interactive workshop. To begin the workshop, and to move participants to respond with their hearts as well as their minds, we shared one of our audio stories with them. The piece is a love story about a couple who renew their connection amidst illness. The story centres on Ruby, who lives with dementia, and her husband, Dennis, her primary carer.

Explore how Ruby & Dennis continue to nurture their connection in this [first extract of the story](#).

Ruby is determined to maintain some independence through the routine of making Dennis his morning cup of tea. However, one morning Ruby badly burns herself.

Listen to the [second extract of the story](#), where Dennis has taken Ruby to A&E.

Following their visit to A&E, Ruby is placed on a virtual ward to receive further monitoring and hospital care from their home.

## Voices from the Community: Insights on Virtual Wards

After listening to the audio story extracts, participants from the four community groups discussed their thoughts on virtual wards, highlighting the cultural factors that may influence how healthcare is accessed and experienced. Explore their perspectives, edited into three short insight audio packages, by clicking on the buttons below:

 **If somebody from your community was placed on a virtual ward like Ruby, how might they feel?**

 **What could be the challenges and barriers for a member of your community to accessing healthcare via a virtual ward?**

 **How can healthcare professionals best support people in your community accessing healthcare on a virtual ward?**

## The story concludes

To close the community group workshops on a hopeful note, we revisited the story of Ruby & Dennis following Ruby's discharge from the virtual ward. They are now able to access more support, allowing time and space to focus on the things that they can enjoy together.

 **Listen to the [final extract of the story](#) where Ruby & Dennis visit a dementia-friendly restaurant.**

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The Ruby and Dennis audio story was originally co-produced with individuals living with dementia, in collaboration with [Dementia United](#). Listen to the full audio story [here](#).



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