Appendix 1 Overview of Telecare

What is Telecare?

Telecare consists of a range of equipment and monitoring services, which can support people to remain independent in their own homes for longer. Telecare can have a significant impact on maintaining physical and mental health, and emotional wellbeing.

There is a wide range of equipment solutions to help people with all different needs. Many of these solutions allow people to alert the monitoring centre should they need help, for instance if they have fallen at home or become disorientated when out and about. Others help by providing reminders or help maintain contact with family and friends.

What might Telecare personal alarm look like?

How is telecare personal alarm installed?

The Telecare equipment is typically connected to the telephone socket and mains power. There are some pieces of equipment that also operate from a mobile network instead of a traditional telephone line. The technician who installs the equipment will always make sure that the equipment is in good working order.

How does the monitoring service work?

If the alarm is pressed, the operator at the monitoring centre will assess and discuss with the person whether they need the emergency services. If not, the operator will contact the most appropriate support, whether that is a named family, friend, and / or carer.

Case Studies

Case study 1

Dee is an elderly lady, with early onset dementia and lives with her husband. Dee generally, manages well, but recently started to become more confused and disorientated. Dee enjoys going out taking her dog for walks but has on a couple of occasions been unable to find her way home and the police have had to come out looking for her. A Pebbell GPS tracker (a personal tracking device that combines roaming GSM (mobile communication) and GPS (satellite-based navigation) technologies and is the size of a key fob. It has a fall down monitor and an SOS button for emergencies. It can also transmit its location by SMS or continually by GPRS data connection) was prescribed to locate where Dee is when she is out. A GEO fence (a virtual geographic boundary, defined by GPS or RFID technology, that enables software to trigger a response when a mobile device enters or leaves a particular area) has also been set up to alert when Dee goes outside of her familiar area. Her husband is able to keep track of where she is and find her if she gets lost.

Case study 2

Double amputee wheelchair user lives alone and has had several falls when transferring, in the bathroom was particularly high-risk area, and he was unable to get himself up safely. A falls device was prescribed so that he can push for help wherever he is in the home and falls.

Case study 3

D lives with his wife. D Has late-stage dementia and is cared for by his wife who was reporting to be sleeping on a mattress on the floor next to him as he would often get up and wander in the night (she previously wouldn’t hear him from her bedroom). A bed sensor mat and carer pager system was prescribed so that she could go back to using her own bed but would be alerted by the pager when he got out of bed so she could support him.