

Telecare

Factsheet



What is Telecare?

Telecare is the name we give to the use of sensors and other equipment that can recognise when there is a problem or emergency situation in your home. Telecare can be used to help:

- People at risk of falls
- People with dementia who may start to go out of their homes at inappropriate times
- People at risk of night seizures
- People who forget to take their medication
- People who are becoming forgetful and leave their cooker rings or taps on
- People at risk of hypothermia

There are several providers of Telecare services available, the council's own service is called Care Connect. You can find details of Telecare services on the Locate website at www.durhamlocate.org.uk

Locate has a range of information and advice, including organisations to help you live as independently as you can.

How does Telecare work?

Sensors and other monitoring equipment are installed in your home and are linked by telephone to a community alarm service or by a pager to a relative or carer.

These sensors detect if you have an accident in your home, if you are unwell, or you need help, perhaps you have fallen. The community alarm service or a relative or carer will be automatically alerted that there is a problem and an appropriate course of action is taken. This action may be to send a Telecare Responder or contact a relative or carer, GP or the emergency services. Community alarm services are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Telecare devices include:

Fall detector

This automatically detects a range of falls and raises an alert. It also has an integral button which can be pressed manually to act in the same way as a pendant alarm. Some falls (i.e. soft falls, controlled descent against a wall or into a chair) may not be detected by the iVi or Vibby. Fall detection technologies that underpin these solutions do not analyse/interpret all situations. Users experiencing a fall which doesn't result in the Vibby or iVi activating should press the help button to manually raise an alarm call.

Bed/chair occupancy sensor

This monitors bed occupancy and generates an alarm for a number of different circumstances. The sensor can also be linked to turn on a bedside light in order to minimise risk of falling at night. A chair occupancy sensor is also available.

Heat Detector

This is a wireless detector which provides additional protection against the risk of fires in rooms where smoke detectors are unsuitable e.g. kitchen. When activated an alarm call is raised at the control centre as well as a local audible alarm.

Smoke Detector

The device provides increased assurance by raising an alarm call at the control centre while also activating a local audible alarm.

Temperature extremes sensor

This sensor checks for unusually low and high temperature extremes and the rate of temperature rise around your home. This helps to minimise the risks associated with changes in temperature including the build-up of heat in a kitchen, for instance when a cooker ring has been left on, and the risk of sustained periods of cold or hot weather. The sensor does not provide an audible alarm.

Door exit sensor and GPS device

The door exit sensor can be used for people with dementia who have started to leave the home at night. The GPS device is a wearable, mobile personal alarm system. It can help vulnerable people be located more easily when they are out and about.

How can you find out whether Telecare can help you?

If you live in County Durham and think Telecare would be suitable to meet your care and support needs, your first step should be to visit our Locate website. Locate hosts a range of information and advice, including organisations to help you live as independently as you can.

If you choose to, you can complete some simple questions about yourself and your situation which will help Locate to guide you to the most appropriate places for support.

Any information you provide is confidential. If you find using the internet difficult ask a friend or relative, who you are happy to share your information with, to help you.

You can use computers for free at your local library (booking advisable). If you don't have anyone who can help or can't access a computer, please contact Social Care Direct who can assess your care and support needs over the telephone.

How much does Telecare cost?

Social care, unlike health care, is not free to everyone. There is usually a cost for care and support services. Some people may be eligible for financial support from the council. Many people find it useful to get advice from an independent financial adviser or an independent organisation. Locate can help you find local independent financial advisers.

If you are assessed as needing Telecare, you will be offered a service from Care Connect. Equipment is free; there is a small charge for the Telecare monitoring/response service for which you would be financially assessed.

Private purchase

You can choose to buy Telecare privately without a care and support assessment. If you are interested in this option please contact Care Connect by calling 03000 262 195 or email care.connect@durham.gov.uk

There will be a charge for any Telecare service provided.

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

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