

# Using telecare as a cost-effective way of supporting independence

## The challenge

Cordia is Scotland's largest provider of home care and facilities management services, delivering services all over the country. It also operates in a number of public and private sector organisations, offering a wide range of services including cleaning, catering, and janitorial services.

How is their community alarm service helping to keep people safe and independent in their own homes?

## What we did

Cordia manages the community alarm service for over 12,000 people in both Glasgow and North Ayrshire local authorities. It provides all aspects of the service including installation, monitoring, call handling and a response service on behalf of City of Glasgow Council and a number of housing associations and care providers. Since September 2014, Cordia has been providing a call monitoring service for North Ayrshire Council. Most clients are older people, and the community alarm service gives them the reassurance that they are only the touch of a button away from calling for help and assistance if needed.



“ Pressure on public finances means health and social care providers need to find more cost-effective ways of supporting people. Community alarms and telecare can play a significant role in enabling people to stay at home, maintaining their independence and wellbeing and reducing pressure on statutory services

**Chris Barton**, Response Centre Manager, Cordia

All alarm calls result in immediate voice contact being established with the highly skilled operators at Cordia's response centre located in Glasgow city centre, which operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Staff assess each situation and decide on the most appropriate action which may include contacting a next of kin, sending out a response team of home carers or calling the emergency services.

Cordia also offers enhanced telecare systems, which use additional sensors in conjunction with the community alarm system to provide extra support. These sensors can detect environmental risks such as smoke, flood or gas and personal risks such as falls or seizures and immediately alert a carer or the response centre.

Cordia also provides a full range of regular management reports to enable care providers to review individual care packages to ensure that the services meet the needs of the service user.



# Results

Given the financial constraints on the public sector, Cordia has continued to increase the use of telecare, using it as an integral part of a care package, which allows Cordia to deliver services which meet the specific needs of its service users, in a discreet and unobtrusive way.

On average the response centre receives around 1300 incoming calls each day. These calls range from service user fallen, enquiry calls, service user unwell, inactivity calls, smoke alarm activations and requests for assistance. The Response Teams attend over 250 call outs each week, with many of these a result of a fall. Telecare is also used to facilitate timely hospital discharge.

Cordia ensures its service users are happy with the service it provides by undertaking an annual Customer Satisfaction Survey:

## Customer Satisfaction Survey 2015-16



\*Not her real name.

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# Mrs Smith's story

## The situation

Mrs Smith\* was 70 and had been diagnosed with terminal brain and lung cancer. She wanted to remain at home, in familiar surroundings for as long as possible, but didn't feel confident being on her own, especially at night. Her daughter lived 5 minutes away, and she and her husband were providing round the clock care and support, including the daughter sleeping at her mother's each night. However, her daughter had her own family and providing this level of support was putting a lot of strain on her own family life. Mrs Smith felt guilty but still needed someone on call.

## The solution

A basic telecare system (Lifeline unit and pendant) was installed, monitored by Cordia.

## The outcome

As a result of the system, Mrs Smith felt confident to be left on her own, knowing that if she needed assistance it was only the push of a button away. Her family were reassured that they could still support Mrs Smith but also carry on with their regular day-to-day lives. Over the time that Mrs Smith remained at home, she only needed assistance once after a fall. The family were immediately called and were able to attend shortly before Cordia's response team arrived to assist Mrs Smith back up and into bed.

“It is not an exaggeration to say that it has changed our life. My mother-in-law feels confident enough to stay at night on her own now. This means that my wife is able to be at home now at night for the children. It's given everyone their lives back

**Mrs Smith's son-in-law**

