

Teleassistance in Spain: adding value with a preventative approach

The challenge

Tunstall Televida supports more than 250,000 people across Spain with telecare and associated services, and its eight monitoring centres manage more than 16 million calls each year¹. In addition to delivering Barcelona's municipal teleassistance service, which serves 75,000 users, Tunstall Televida also provides Barcelona's Local Teleassistance Service (SLT). The SLT provides 67,000 people who are older and/or have long-term care needs with a range of support including telecare systems; monitoring; home care; prevention and wellbeing services.

How has Tunstall Televida combined a preventative approach, public-private collaboration, technology and continuous improvement to create an international reference site for teleassistance delivery?

What is teleassistance?

The Tunstall Televida teleassistance service combines telecare monitoring and response, coordinates social care and third party services and delivers proactive outbound contact from monitoring centres. Teleassistance aims to provide continued contact and support to older and vulnerable people in the community, helping them to remain independent for as long as possible and delay or avoid the need for more complex interventions.

Barcelona's SLT is one example, which has been delivered by Tunstall Televida since 2005. Commissioned by Barcelona Provincial Council in conjunction with the municipalities in the province, the SLT has grown considerably, from 3,800 service users to almost 70,000 today. Currently 10% of people aged 65 years and over and 25% of people aged over 80 receive the SLT service.



The success of the public-private partnership is due to the relationship we have with Tunstall Televida. They understand our logic, we understand theirs, and we work in partnership together.

Josep Antoni Dominguez, Head of the Support Services to Social Programmes, Barcelona Provincial Council



Highlights

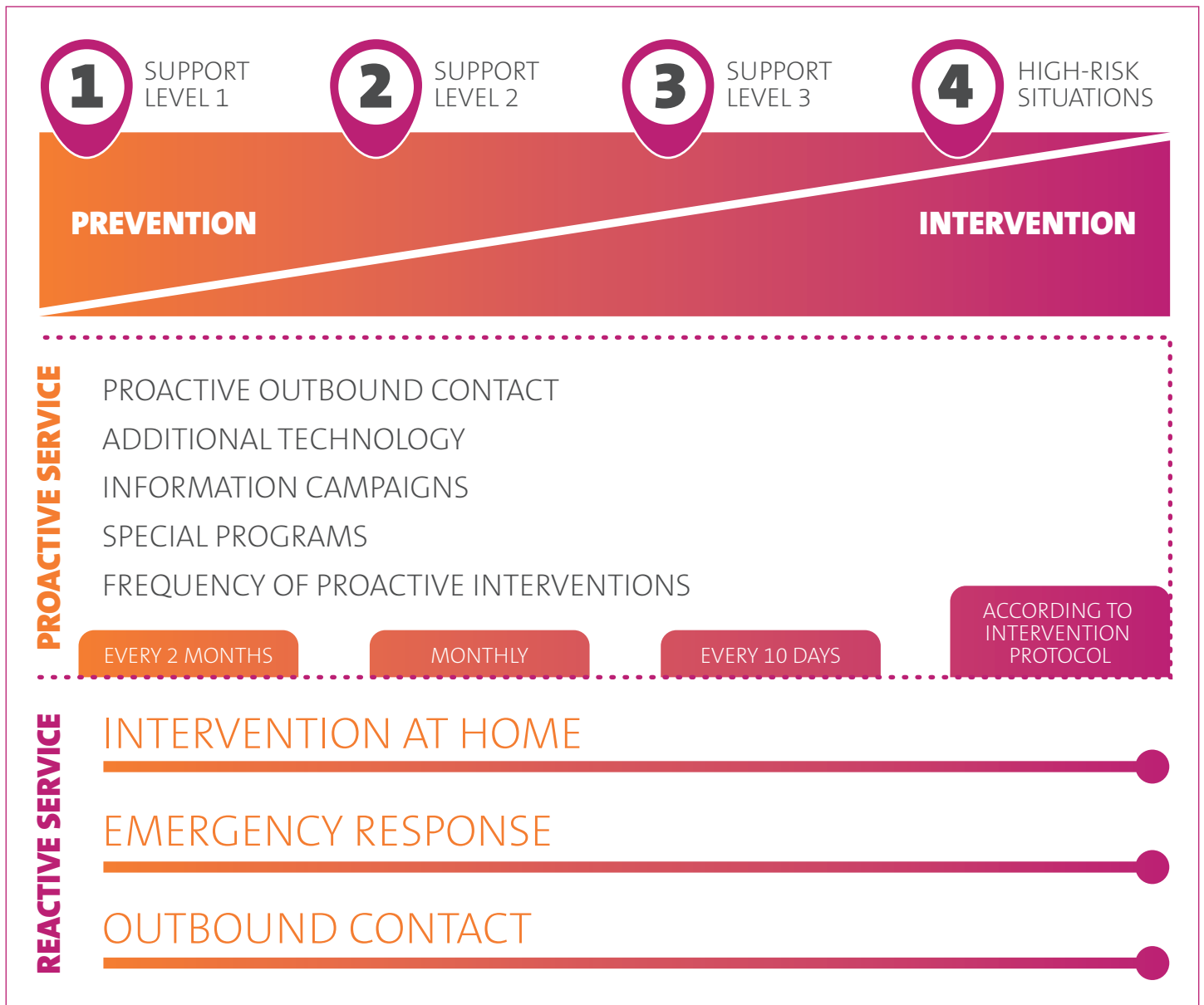
- 250,000 service users across Spain
- 16 million calls handled¹ across 8 centres
- Tiered service according to need
- Preventative approach with outbound calls and rapid response
- Coordinated across multiple stakeholders
- Reduced A&E visits and ambulance call outs
- Delayed admissions to residential care

¹ 2014 figures



What is the Tunstall Televida teleassistance model?

The model is based on a tiered system of needs-based intervention:



Preventing as well as reacting

Including prevention in the delivery model has been a key contributor to the success of the teleassistance service. It has significantly reduced the number of emergency service escalations, improved the wellbeing of users and made effective use of public services.

Operators at the monitoring centre answer incoming calls in an average time of less than 10 seconds, and approximately 60% of calls are outbound. Operators proactively call service users on a regular basis to check on their wellbeing, remind them of appointments, prompt them to take medication, confirm medication has been delivered or wish them a happy birthday. The frequency of contact is adjusted depending upon the needs of the individual. Operators will also contact service users who experience a crisis, such as a bereavement, to offer reassurance and assess their mood and health.

Special protocols and skilled staff are in place to support service users where there is risk of suicide or abuse, and in the event of major disasters.

Tunstall Televida also provides a programme called Let's Talk (Hablemos de), where operators make calls to discuss public health issues relevant to users, such as tips for fire safety in the home, advice on how to prevent the spread of flu, ways of dealing with periods of warmer or colder weather air pollution, or how to prevent allergies. Tunstall Televida works with the council and other public services such as health, fire and rescue and the police to refine the advice they give as part of the programme, define protocols and agree prevention/training campaign delivery.

Integrated response services

The Barcelona SLT service includes 11 mobile response units that cover the entire area of service, enabling a 24-hour response to possible emergencies to people at home. The Service Level Agreement requires that responders must reach addresses in Barcelona within 30 minutes, and so motorbikes are used to negotiate busy roads. Each vehicle is equipped with medical equipment and manned by specialist trained social care technicians offering swift support; for example first aid, helping users after a fall and supporting people who feel depressed.

In addition to this, the service's social workers make initial visits to new service users, undertaking a comprehensive assessment which collects more than 200 pieces of information including data on the person's situation with regard to health, family, support, social network, housing and emergency contacts. The social workers also conduct annual follow-up visits to users, to assess their status and, if necessary, amend their service accordingly.



CareChat - supporting people with communication difficulties with pictograms and text

Advanced technologies to support users

The teleassistance service can provide more advanced telecare such as falls, smoke, gas and carbon monoxide detectors and sensors which monitor activity/inactivity. Today there are more than 5,500 of these sensors in operation. Tunstall Televida has also developed CareChat, enabling the service to be accessed by people with communication difficulties, through the use of smartphones and a decision tree with predefined pictograms and text.

Inter-municipal network

When Tunstall Televida began to deliver the SLT teleassistance service in 2005, it worked with Barcelona Provincial Council and the 310 municipalities in the province to design a unique public service model to support older people and those with long-term health and care needs. By delivering a public teleassistance service under a single contract, public resources are used efficiently, there is greater consistency across the region and innovation is enabled and encouraged. Delivering the service in this way also enables increased cooperation with emergency services, successfully managing crises in the home such as falls, and local situations such as floods, fires and extreme temperatures in a coordinated way.

Professional and vocational training

Tunstall Televida strives for excellence, and the dedication, professionalism and experience of the 260 people working each day to deliver the SLT is an essential part of success of the model. Approximately 35% of staff work in the monitoring centre, and around half are home care personnel, such as mobile response officers, social workers, and technicians/installers. Over half of Televida's employees have a university qualification in a relevant field, such as social care.

Additional campaigns and programmes

Tunstall Televida also provides the following services:

- **Health** – campaign to promote healthy lifestyles, programme focused on people with long-term conditions
- **Safety** – campaigns to prevent falls, improve safety at home, improve safety away from home
- **Inclusion** – campaign to reduce social isolation
- **Carers** – campaign to support carers



Outcomes

Teleassistance provides preventative, proactive support to more independent service users. Vulnerable or at risk service users receive increased levels of support according to their need. Care services are prioritised and coordinated to ensure resources are used effectively and focused on the areas where they will deliver the best outcomes.

The service has significantly delayed unwanted moves into residential care, and reduced emergency calls from end users and their families which has correspondingly reduced ambulance call outs and A&E attendances.

Examples of results for individual users include:

Care Service A

- 20% reduction in carer emergency calls as a result of carer support services
- 10% reduction in service user emergency calls
- Approximately 12 month delay in move to residential care

Care Service B

- Cost savings of €375 - €1106 per person, per month due to avoided/delayed admission to residential care as a result of combining telecare with other services
- 99.7% of users reported feeling more calm and safe at home

For the Barcelona SLT service specifically, its latest survey in 2014 saw users rating the service and an average of 9.8 points out of 10. The SLT also obtained, in 2013, recognition as Best Practice of European Public Sector Award (EPSA) by the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA).

The SLT was given an award for developing a successful public-private collaboration model in 2013 by the prestigious ESADE business school.



I am very happy with the service. Whenever I have a problem they're always there to help and there's always someone here very quickly if you fall. I had left things on the stove before and there could have been a fire, so I was given a heat detector. I haven't burned anything since, but I know that if I do the service will keep me safe at home.

Aurora, 81, telecare service user



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