

Making care person-centred, not room-centred

The challenge

Park View Nursing Home in Halifax is a 41 bed home offering comprehensive and individualised 24 hour care. How has installing a new care assist system transformed the way it delivers care, increasing efficiency and the quality of life of residents?

What we did

Park View had an 18-year old nurse call system which used wall mounted units in residents' rooms which would emit loud alarms throughout the building if a resident activated the unit. Several screens in communal areas of the building would then give details of the resident asking for assistance. In addition, the home used telecare sensors such as pressure mats and fall detectors which would raise an alert on a pager when triggered.

As the existing nurse call system was coming to the end of its life, the Park View management team began to review options for its renewal, and how any new system could also support the use of telecare. As a result, they looked into the use of Tunstall Carecom™, initially solely as a telecare platform alongside a traditional-style nurse call system, but soon realised that Tunstall Carecom could provide a cost-effective, advanced and integrated care assist and telecare system.

“ The new system has made such a massive difference to everyone's lives – residents, staff and relatives. Residents feel much safer knowing how quickly they can get help at the touch of a button. It's enabled us to improve the way we deliver care in ways no traditional system ever could.

**Jason Sharpe, Operations Manager,
Park View**





Photo posed by model.

About Tunstall Carecom

Traditional nurse call systems used in care homes rely on wired infrastructure with fixed call points designed to accommodate the restrictions of the building, rather than meeting the needs of the people living and working in it. Tunstall Carecom is a flexible system better suited to the demands of modern care delivery, by enabling care to be designed around individual residents.

The majority of the system is wireless, meaning installation is fast and straightforward: receivers are placed around the building, and beacons placed on walls at strategic locations, which interact with smart pendants worn by residents. The pendants not only allow users to raise alarm calls but also offer a range of supporting functionality depending on the specific demands of each facility, including location reporting, cancel at source, access control, and geofencing. The system also supports a wide array of telecare integrations and sensors, including wearable devices.

Caregivers are able to manage the system on a number of devices, including a mobile app, and calls from individual residents can be routed to specific carers. Managers can access an intuitive, GDPR compliant online care planning platform. The system can document auditable activities and provide management reporting.

System design

Park View's Tunstall Carecom system comprises nine mobile phones for staff, three wireless receivers and a property exit system by the main door. Each phone has the Tunstall Carecom app installed. Four phones are allocated to night staff who work from 7.30 pm to 7.30 am. During the day, staff have been divided into two groups, with four carers active on the ground floor and four on the first floor, along with a team leader.

All residents wear a smart pendant on their wrist or around their neck which enables them to call for help from anywhere in the building, rather than only from a room unit as previously, and gives care staff the ability to locate and quickly assist them. Pendants can also be used by staff as a panic alarm if required.

Quest for Quality in Care Homes

Park View is part of NHS Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group's Quest for Quality in Care Homes, a successful initiative which uses a multidisciplinary team supported by Tunstall technology to reduce avoidable hospital admissions and improve care for residents.

Since its installation, the management at Park View have discovered that the Tunstall Carecom system has numerous advantages over a traditional nurse call system:

Reduced noise levels

The previous system relied on fixed alarm call points throughout the building, which meant that in order to alert staff wherever they were, a loud noise had to be emitted to reach throughout the home 24 hours a day. This impacted negatively on the atmosphere in the home, and also increased anxiety in residents and visitors as they were aware that the alerts indicated some kind of adverse event may be happening. Tunstall Carecom alerts are delivered discreetly to relevant carers' phones, meaning residents are no longer disturbed, day and night, improving their sleep patterns and quality of life. It also means Park View is a nicer place to work.

Increased dignity

Tunstall Carecom means that only relevant staff rather than everyone in the building is alerted to events. This means the right staff can attend quickly and discreetly, increasing the privacy and dignity of residents. Because the name of the resident concerned is visible only on carers' mobiles, rather than on screens throughout the building, this also supports GDPR compliance.

Efficiency

As Tunstall Carecom operates as an app, staff can easily call each other to communicate on their mobiles. The old system meant staff regularly had to search the building to locate each other if they needed support, such as help with a resident or locating a piece of equipment. The previous system also meant that staff had to visit a fixed room unit or display screen in order to view active alarm calls, rather than being able to view them from wherever they were in the building. Alerts can be cancelled at source from the pendant, avoiding the need for staff to cancel on a fixed wall unit. Because the system operates using mobile phones, if the emergency services are required, staff can call 999 immediately, saving valuable time.

Increased morale

Staff at Park View feel happier at work, due to the reduced noise, ease of communication and more efficient working practices. Tunstall Carecom has also been configured to ensure workload is spread more evenly amongst the staff at Park View.

Alarms are issued to carers' mobiles dynamically, so if a carer has just received a call, the next alarm will be sent to a different carer. This enables the first carer to finish their task, and also ensures that tasks are fairly distributed amongst the team. If calls are not picked up they will move on to another carer to ensure that all calls are answered. Carers now only receive calls from the residents they are responsible for. Instead of hearing approximately 500 calls in a shift, each staff member now only receives approximately 50.

Better care planning

Managers can access an intuitive, GDPR compliant online data collection and care planning platform. The system can document auditable activities and provide management reporting, freeing staff time and enabling better care planning. The system can be securely accessed from an internet browser anywhere by people with relevant permissions, enabling managers to check on the status of residents and review their support at any time, even away from the care home.

Staff mobiles also have the Log my Care app, which enables them to access and record care notes as they work, reducing the need to write up notes at the end of their shift. This saves them time, and means information is more complete and accurate as it is written down immediately, giving more detail on residents to inform care planning.

Person-centred

The old system would also only allow additional equipment to be wired to the room panel, limiting its use, whereas Tunstall Carecom allows a range of wireless sensors to be tailored to the needs of individual residents, for example:

- Bed occupancy sensors can be used to alert staff when residents at risk of falls during the night begin to get out of bed so that they can be helped
- Wrist or neck worn fall detectors can be used by residents at risk of falling during the day
- Universal sensors can be fitted to residents' doors to raise an alert if they leave their room and may attempt to enter another resident's room.

Results

Tunstall Carecom has enabled more bespoke and dignified care to be delivered to residents, and supports a least restrictive approach, as the technology helps to manage risks that may otherwise have required residents' movements to be limited for safety reasons, such as falls. It has created a calmer atmosphere in the home, due to the reduced noise and because staff no longer need to rush around the building to find residents or colleagues. It is supporting better care planning by providing greater insight, and reducing staff turnover by making it a better place to work.

Using technology is becoming increasingly important to meeting the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) five key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) used when inspecting health and social care services, particularly in relation to person-centred care. By investing in Tunstall Carecom and telecare, Park View is demonstrating its commitment to using technology to work towards delivering outstanding care to its residents, in line with CQC's strategic priority of encouraging innovation.

In addition to this, the new system has freed staff time to the degree that they can now undertake other duties

and has enabled the introduction of a new approach to food and nutrition at Park View. The kitchen has been redesigned to use high quality pre-prepared meals, which are nutritious and appetising, supplied by an award-winning provider and managed by in-house staff. The meals can be designed to cater for specific dietary requirements, such as malnutrition, diabetes and dysphagia (difficulty swallowing), as well as meeting specific cultural or religious needs.

Next Steps

The next innovation at Park View is the planned introduction of Carelocks to resident's doors. A locking mechanism is fitted to each door which can be opened by the resident or staff via approved smart pendants. This makes it easier, quicker and cheaper to manage than traditional key and lock systems, for example, if keys are lost or locks damaged. Residents with limited dexterity can easily enter their rooms without assistance, and people with dementia can access their own rooms but not those of other residents. All arrival and departure times are logged on the system, giving an audit trail on who has been in which room, when and for how long.

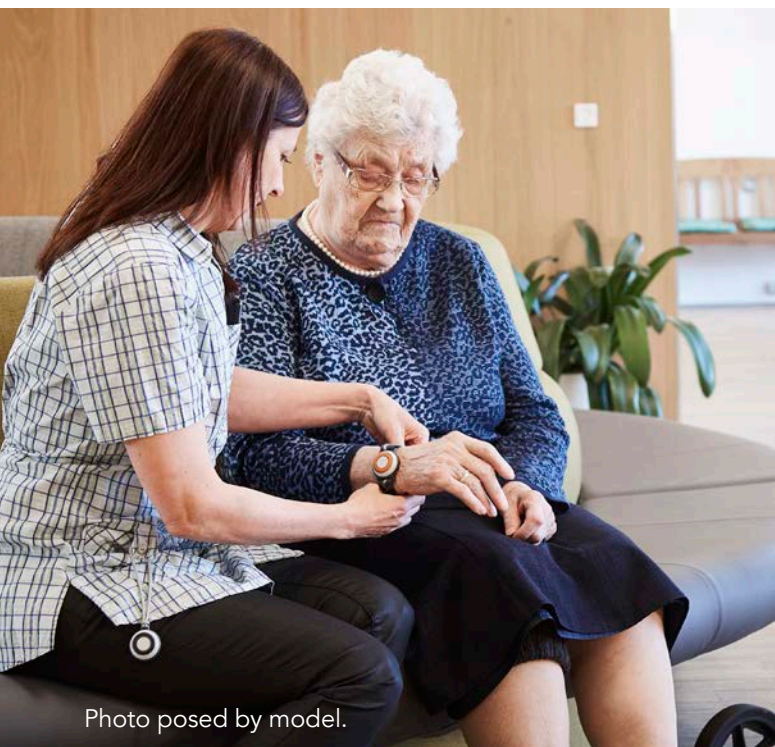


Photo posed by model.

COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the amazing staff at Park View isolated at the home for nine weeks. The Carecom system was configured to enable care to be delivered in bubbles – the staff were split into three teams and were allocated to care for specific residents, reducing the risk of any cross infection and enabling residents to be isolated should this be required.

Jason Sharpe commented: "Without Carecom it would have been so much harder to protect our residents during the pandemic. It's made such a difference to staff, residents and families already, but during the last few months its been absolutely invaluable. I don't know how other care homes are managing without it."

Tunstall Healthcare (UK) Ltd is a member of the Tunstall Group.

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