

The benefits of managed TEC services

The challenge

Truly person-centred technology enabled care (TEC) can require equipment from a range of manufacturers. Identifying, purchasing and managing a range of devices from multiple sources can prove challenging and resource intensive for local authority community alarm centres. How is Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) working with Tunstall to ensure the people it supports get the technology combination that is right for them?

What we did

Tunstall has been working with Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) as a technology partner for its telecare service since 2006. Following a successful tender submission, in October 2018, Tunstall was also appointed to deliver a managed telecare service on behalf of the Council.

Referrals from NCC's Assistive Technology Team are received at Tunstall by specially trained Connected Care Coordinators who process applications. Dedicated engineers have been assigned to support the service, undertaking installations, demonstrations, deinstallations, maintenance and repairs. All equipment is sourced by Tunstall on behalf of the Council. In addition to providing Lifeline home units and telecare sensors such as fall, smoke and heat detectors for example, this also includes items sourced from other suppliers such as dementia clocks, smart speakers and smart plugs, all tailored to the needs of individual service users. Tunstall Response monitors all connections and refers to the NCC Responder Team, nominated contacts or the emergency services as appropriate. Depending on their needs, service users may have stand-alone equipment only, such as a medication dispenser, which doesn't require monitoring. Once deinstalled, equipment is returned to Tunstall, where it is cleaned, tested and stored before redeployment.



Service users pay a nominal fee each week for monitoring, but telecare sensors are provided free of charge if they are required to meet an identified social care need, subject to the fairer contribution policy for social care. NCC also has Reablement Assessment flats, with telecare in place to support people leaving hospital, helping them to increase wellbeing and regain skills to enable them to return home.



Results

Monitored connections have risen from 1,010 in December 2018 to 1,375 in March 2020. In addition, as at April 2020, there are 1,531 people using stand-alone equipment (not monitored by Tunstall Response) to support them at home as part of the service.

Of the five main KPIs in place to measure Tunstall's service delivery, all are currently (as at April 2020) above target:

- Installation 100%
- Hospital discharge 100%
- Faults 100%
- De-installations 100%
- Maintenance 100%

The service uses a tracking process in MOSAIC and Nottinghamshire County Council's Business Intelligence Hub to measure key outcomes for individuals receiving the service, which produced the following results for the period 01/10/2018 to 31/12/2019:

- 289 cases where a high and immediate risk of admission to residential care was delayed/avoided
- 739 cases where a delayed transfer of care was avoided
- 250 cases where a high risk of carer breakdown was delayed/avoided
- 655 cases where additional community care costs were avoided

Net cash avoidance savings to Nottinghamshire County Council after additional service costs, costs of home care for people diverted from residential care, and loss of client contributions are deducted were **£2,243,665** for the period 01/04/2019 to 31/12/2019.

COVID-19 emergency

The Telecare Service continues to maintain as close to normal service levels as possible during the COVID-19 emergency. While engineers will not enter homes with symptomatic residents, all other working practices have been adapted to ensure service continuity and the safety of service users and engineers. This includes:

- Engineers programming any required equipment in their vans
- The engineer then knocks on the service user's door, leaving the equipment at their door, before moving a safe distance away
- Once the service user opens their door, the engineer explains who they are and lets them know that they will call them from their van
- The engineer then returns to their van and calls the service user to talk them through the installation of the equipment

Engineers are also working at weekends to ensure anyone vulnerable during the COVID-19 emergency can have access to the service.

“ The Tunstall managed service enables us to create packages of care that are designed to meet the unique needs of some of the people who need us most. It means we can get everything we need from a single partner, and know that this is managed effectively every step of the way from referral to decommissioning.

Mark Douglas, Assistive Technology Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council