

PAT (Portable Appliance Testing)

Tunstall telecare equipment does not need to be tested under PAT regulations, as the telecare sensors work on a radio frequency and the Lifeline home units themselves operate in conjunction with a plug transformer and therefore the cable to the unit is low voltage. However, brief details of PAT testing follow as they may be useful when planning your overall service.

PAT testing forms part of a Health & Safety Policy to ensure employers take reasonable steps to ensure no danger results from using electrical appliances. Where electrical appliances are either used by employees, used in public areas or are supplied or hired the Health & Safety at Work Act places a duty of care on employers.

The level of inspection and testing required is dependent upon the risk of the appliance becoming faulty, which is in turn dependent upon the type of appliance, the nature of its use and the environment in which it is used. Portable appliances include items:

- Weighing less than 18kg which can easily be moved from one place to another, e.g. toasters, vacuums
- Hand held during normal use, e.g. hairdryers
- IT equipment, e.g. computers, printers
- Stationary appliances, e.g. fridges, cookers
- Fixed appliances, e.g. wall heaters

The Health & Safety Executive offers no absolute rules on the frequency of the testing but factors such as the environment, likelihood of abuse, equipment type and construction should be considered.

Testing must be undertaken by people with appropriate qualifications, skills and experience. Visual inspection and electrical testing should be undertaken by a competent person.

Records must also be kept in order provide evidence, should it be required, that all reasonable steps and due diligence were undertaken to comply with the regulations. This will also highlight any common or recurring faults with equipment.