

2007 ALARM AWARDS SUBMISSION

PEOPLE RISK

INDEPENDENT LIVING THROUGH TELECARE SOLUTIONS

Executive Summary

Coast & Country Housing and the Borough of Redcar & Cleveland are faced with a range of challenges presented by an ageing and increasingly infirm population. It is imperative that the risks connected with these challenges are effectively managed through the implementation of new and innovative services. Telecare is an essential component for managing this strategic risk whilst at the same time addressing risks associated with maintaining and sustaining independent living for vulnerable people. Telecare can be defined as "the continuous, automatic, and remote monitoring of real live emergencies and lifestyle changes over time in order to manage the risks associated with independent living."

In simple terms, Telecare consists of various sensors or monitors placed around the home (for example, fall or gas detectors) linked to a Lifeline home unit, monitored 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by the Coast & Country Contact Centre, allowing swift and decisive action to be taken should an incident occur.

Telecare can support professionals in making risk and care assessments by providing them with objective data about the user's real levels of activity, vital signs and circumstances within the normal environment of their own home and day-to-day living.

Telecare can give users greater control of their own lives by reminding them of tasks they wish to complete or providing information about developing risks. Such applications can support and maintain independence, self-esteem and dignity for the user and provide family and carers with reassurance and peace of mind.

Telecare can play an important role in maintaining independence for users and can also provide effective support for carers alongside traditional healthcare, social care and housing initiatives.

Telecare enables people to remain in their own homes with increased safety, confidence and independence. Telecare is increasingly being seen as part of a care or support package with related services such as home care.

Main Submission

A clear need?

One of the main challenges to Coast & Country Housing and the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland is to ensure there is sufficient, appropriate, quality service provision to meet the needs of an ageing population requiring new, innovative and cost effective support and care solutions to help maintain and sustain safe, secure independent living.

The 2001 census showed a higher number of older people in the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland than the previous projections for the same year. The census indicated that the number of people over the age of 65 years living in the borough was 23,267 forming 16.5% of the total population. Moreover the projections to the year 2011, 2016 and 2021 show that the numbers of people in the borough over the age of 65 will rise considerably as a proportion of the overall population which itself is reducing over this period.

The customer profile of Coast & Country Housing supports the demographic trends identified in the 2001 census. A recent tenant survey, 'About You', evidences that over 50% of our current customers are over the age of 55 (the Government's definition of an older person) and 47% are vulnerable or suffer from a long standing illness and/or disability.

Coast & Country Housing recognizes that the number of people requiring community based health and social care support, and the levels and complexity of those needs, is expected to increase considerably over the next decade. People will have high expectations and have greater choice and control over the services they receive. Telecare can help in delivering greater choice by providing safe and secure independent living.

In summary, the clear need to address risks for our customers, the Company and our partners the Telecare Service:

- Keeps customers in their homes living safely and independently.
- Enables the Company to benefit from sustained tenancies and provides a service to meet need, now and in the future.
- Enables partners, such as health and social care, to reduce the reliance on traditional and costly care and support solutions.

Our Approach

Our approach to developing and delivering the Telecare Service has been very much partnership focused.

Coast & Country Housing has been supporting 5000 elderly and vulnerable customers across all tenures since 2002 through the 24/7 Homecall Community Alarm service.

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, assisted by the Supporting People Review process, concluded that Coast & Country Housing were best placed to be appointed as the partner for developing and delivering Telecare across the Borough. The partnership was formally agreed in early 2006.

In light of the partnership agreement and to reflect the commitment to delivering modern, cutting edge technologies the Board of Coast & Country Housing in June 2006 approved a reviewed Business Plan for a major £1m investment programme in equipment and technology.

Innovation in Implementing the Telecare Service

A Partnership Steering Group was set up to oversee the development and implementation of the Telecare Service.

From the local authority perspective the priority before implementing the service was focused on raising health and social care professional's knowledge and awareness of Telecare as a new solution to providing care and support.

For Coast & Country Housing the priority was ensuring that systems and processes were in place to effectively procure equipment for installation and monitoring with reliable, uninterrupted 24/7 functionality.

The Steering Group continues to meet to coordinate the service as it develops.

To develop awareness, knowledge and understanding of Telecare a series of workshops were held with staff during the summer of 2006 at the Coast & Country Housing Telecare Demonstration Suite. This facility was set up so that practical demonstrations of how Telecare technologies work in a 'mock' home living environment could be given to staff. This approach was very much about making Telecare 'alive and real' to staff raising understanding about how Telecare can meet care and support needs.

The Demonstration Suite continues to be used as training and marketing tool. A GPS linked mobile demonstration system has also been established to enable the

Telecare Coordinator to visit prospective partners and customers, such as GP's and specialist health teams, to show how Telecare sensors and units work.

The Steering Group agreed that a formal and high profile launch of Telecare was required to further raise awareness and knowledge across strategic partners and agencies.

This took place in late July 2006 with Vera Baird MP QC officially launching the service.

The launch was captured by a Podcast which is available for viewing on the Coast & Country Housing website.

An informative fact based leaflet has been produced in partnership for use by professionals and prospective customers and is available from a range of outlets including public buildings, GP's and hospitals.

Success and Outcomes

Fundamentally a success of Telecare to date is the commitment to partnership working that underpins everything that we do.

Operationally the service commenced in September 2006 when the Steering Group agreed all assessment and referral processes.

Since that time a number of outcomes have been achieved:

- A Telecare Coordinator appointed to work on behalf of the partnership
- £1m investment programme agreed to upgrade equipment and technology (commenced April 2007) including business recovery and continuity arrangements
- Innovative procurement to ensure equipment availability at all times reducing risks associated with delayed installations
- 41 customers currently supported with Telecare
- 3 referrals currently being assessed
- 306 calls have been received to date, of which
 - 19% have been satisfactorily dealt with through voice/intercom contact
 - 66% have been test calls or where no response required
 - 15% have required an emergency visit by either a Warden, Doctor or Next of Kin

The Telecare Service is developing at a rapid pace despite its operational infancy. There is clear evidence that the technology being used is assisting in enabling vulnerable people to live more independently and safely in their own homes.

Strategically the service is recognizing that our customer base in the Borough is changing and that people are living longer. Without services such as Telecare it will become more difficult to manage the risks associated with an ageing and increasingly infirm customer base.