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Local Authority Chief Executives
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cc NHS 24 and Scottish Ambulance Service
Social Work Scotland
Care Inspectorate



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Dear Colleague

TELECARE Call Handling Review

Telecare continues to represent a vital means of providing care and support at home in Scotland, enabling a significant number of people to live independently in a homely setting in their community. Indeed, close to 180,000 people in Scotland currently use some form of telecare service, a number that continues to rise on a yearly basis.

Call handling arrangements, including call monitoring and initial responses, represent a central element of telecare provision. Earlier telecare reviews, conducted by Farrpoint and Deloitte, identified considerable variation in the approaches to call handling taken across Scotland and recommended that further analysis be undertaken in this area.

For this reason, the Scottish Government and COSLA commissioned Farrpoint to conduct a review of telecare call handling services to better understand existing call handling arrangements and to identify and provide an initial evaluation of potential options for future service delivery aimed at improving outcomes, whilst delivering best value.

Given the importance attached to telecare call handling services, this review offered an opportunity to map and understand local variations in call handling, consider potential options for service delivery to inform local decision making and inform future investment in telecare as a cohesive element of a transformed health and social care provision across Scotland. The opportunity to consider this in context of the necessary transition from analogue to digital Telecare is also relevant.

This review has now been completed, and the final report is included with this communication.

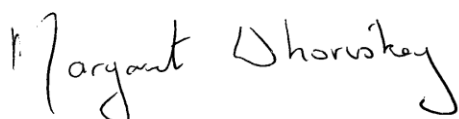
The findings outlined throughout the report were identified by Farrpoint through comprehensive stakeholder engagement including responses received to questionnaires issued to all Telecare Partnerships and through a comprehensive interview process, which included representatives from Local Authorities, Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Scotland, NHS 24, SOLACE, the Local Government Digital Office, amongst many others.



The report is split into two parts: Part 1 provides an analysis of existing telecare call handling arrangements across Scotland, while Part 2 highlights and provides an analysis of several potential options for consideration with respect to improvements to future call handling arrangements, providing an initial assessment of their associated benefits and some of the practicalities associated with each. Proposed options range from the implementation of identified best practice to the use of proactive services and consumer devices. The report recommends that further analysis of the call handling options presented is commissioned to determine the options that warrant further investigation.

On that basis, early consideration of next steps has centred on analysis of the “quick wins” detailed in the report – namely proposals aimed at improving services that do not require large scale technical or operational change to implement. A further communication will be issued in due course detailing proposed next steps, outlining how any approach will be developed in a collaborative manner and will take full account of local decision making.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this review and hope that its findings represent a valuable contribution to what is a vitally important area of local service delivery. The review outlines a number of areas for further consideration and discussion and we welcome any initial views on its findings. Please direct any queries or feedback to NSS.TEC@nhs.net.



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John Wood

Chief Officer for Health and Social Care
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