COVID-19 TELECARE UPDATE

This COVID-19 Telecare Update is produced by the Scottish Government TEC Programme, TEC in Housing and Digital Telecare for Scottish Local Government in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The update aims to provide information on issues Telecare Services are currently facing and includes links to useful resources, publications and websites, updates on national work to support Telecare Service continuity, and examples of practice that have kindly been shared by Service providers in Scotland. If you have any questions relating to any of the content within this update or need further support, please get in touch.

We are also using Microsoft Teams as a collaboration space to share resources, information and advice, ask questions and discuss topics of interest relating to COVID-19. If you would like to join please register now.

We have recently launched Telecare Drop-In Sessions which are held fortnightly, providing support for telecare service continuity during COVID-19. Join our next online session on Thursday 16 April from 12.30 - 1.30pm, to hear more about outbound calling from Stirling and Clackmannanshire Telecare Service and Viewpoint.

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Remote Working for Alarm Receiving Centre Staff

Remote working for call takers can assist in keeping services operating if staff are unable to work from offices as normal. Although not all Partnerships' ARC solutions are currently able to work in this way, it is an option for some. For example, both Hanover and Bield's BR24 successfully moved to remote working early on in the COVID-19 outbreak.

Digital Telecare and TEC are currently exploring options for remote working. If you have successfully implemented a remote working solution, in the planning stages or are interested in finding out more please get in touch.

Outbound Calling

A number of Telecare Services have increased or introduced outbound calling to support vulnerable service users during the COVID-19 outbreak. The calls, often undertaken by staff self-isolating at home, check on the welfare of service users, aim to provide reassurance to a person self-isolating on their own and can link the person with local initiatives, such as services delivering food and medication. The calls also provide an opportunity to update a service user's details and test their alarm. Other organisations are identifying the most isolated, such as those without family nearby or living rurally.

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Latest Guidance on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Guidance on PPE was revised on 8 April 2020 and can be found on the Health Protection Scotland website.

Version 1.6 of the Covid-19 Information and Guidance for social or community care and residential settings was also published 6 April 2020 and is available on the **Health Protection Scotland website.**

Alzheimer Scotland's Dementia Helpline

Joyce Gray from Alzheimer Scotland joined our last Telecare Drop-in Session on 2 April to share information on their *free phone 24-hour Dementia Helpline* which provides information, signposting and emotional support to people with the illness, their families, friends and professionals. The helpline will actively support in accessing things like groceries and medication as well as providing emotional support. For more information, visit the Alzheimer's Scotland website.

TEC is working with Alzheimer Scotland to explore the possibility of Alarm Receiving Centres, where appropriate, transferring calls directly through to the Dementia Helpline.

Published: 14 April 2020

Self-installation of a Basic Unit

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, many services are avoiding entering the homes of people who are shielding or self-isolating unless it is for essential care and support. As many staff are also self-isolating, in some areas the number of available staff trained to install basic telecare is reduced. Some telecare services, for example Argyll and Bute, are addressing this issue by training staff who **have** to enter home for essential care and support, to carry out basic installations.

The Technology Enabled Care Services Association (TSA) has produced an Introductory Guide to Installing TEC Equipment (for the newly trained) during Covid-19. Installation videos are also available that can be used in training sessions.

Other services are exploring button and box self-installation by the service user, often with the support of a family member or carer.

Information on self-installation - "Plug&Play"

- The TSA has produced 'A Guide to Providing a Self-installation Service';
- The TSA has also compiled 'Manufacturers Self-installation Guides and Videos'. This includes information on Tynetec Reach/Reach Plus, Tunstall Lifeline, Doro Sara and Chiptech Eva;
- A quick set-up brochure for Tunstall's Lifeline is available on the Digital Telecare Teams environment.

Hanover Scotland already implement' supported self-installation':

- Their units are all pre-programmed and whilst they issue a letter providing some guidance, when they receive the unit, customers are encouraged to contact Hanover and they will support them through the basic installation. It is important all units are fully programmed and tested before they are dispatched.
- They recommend a telephone risk assessment is conducted, to identify if the recipient will be able to undertake installation; if not, ascertain if the person has an advocate that could assist.

Bon Accord Care Community Alarm Telecare Service in Aberdeen City and **Glasgow City Telecare Service** have both produced guidance on alarm installation, which is available now on our Microsoft Teams environment.

Availability of Base Units: The TEC Programme and Digital Telecare are working with Scotland Excel to establish current stock levels of basic units, should demand for installations increase during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Decontamination of Equipment

Decontamination is the process of cleansing, disinfecting and sterilising technology enabled care equipment and the environment. The equipment should then be recycled or decommissioned and disposed of to prevent contamination. Quality control measures should be used to monitor technology enabled care equipment with tracking systems in place during the decontamination process.

The TSA TEC Quality has created Covid-19 Infection Control and Decontamination Guidance. This provides a summary of information for operating responder and installation services, in which staff may come into direct contact with service users and carers. Core Decontamination Principles outlined in the guidance are outlined below:
- All used/returned equipment should be considered to be contaminated;
- Staff must maintain high standards of infection prevention techniques, including thorough hand cleaning and use of the necessary PPE;
- Staff should receive training in the correct cleaning procedure for each type of equipment they may come into contact with;
- Contaminated equipment shall be kept separate from decontaminated equipment.;
- Manufacturer guidelines should be followed for the cleaning of specialist equipment;
- Cleaning cloths and PPE should be double bagged and left aside for 72 hours prior to disposal;
- TEC Equipment collected from a service user's home/care home etc. should be double bagged before placing in the vehicle. On return to base, an area for storing bags containing contaminated equipment should be created in an area away from staff and clean equipment to avoid cross contamination. Bags should not be opened for 72 hours;
- Vehicles used by responders and installers should be decontaminated frequently and between every shift handover. Sanitiser should be used to clean down seats, gearsticks, steering wheel etc.

Guidance on Cleaning for Mangar Lifting Cushions and Raizer Cleansing is also available.

The Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) is publishing regular COVID-19 briefings, which includes information on care and support. The briefings can be found here.

Information to support service users' families, friends and unpaid carers

A number of Telecare Services have written to service users to let them know that during the COVID-19 outbreak they will be working more closely with families and other named contacts to provide care and support when it is required following an alert. The following information may be useful to signpost families and other unpaid carers to during the COVID-19 outbreak:

The Scottish Government Guidance for Carers, which encourages carers to:
- Talk with family and friends about who could take over their caring role if they become ill or need to self-isolate, particularly now, whilst social work services are under additional pressure;
- Ensure they have key information about the person they care for easily available so anyone taking over their care has all the information they need.

Where carers, family and friends are unable to provide essential care for someone, the guidance advises they contact their local social work department and provide contact details.

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland provides information on the YooToo app, which can support families and informal carers to coordinate and manage themselves around a loved one.

The TEC Programme's FIRST Project has produced films that provide information for the public on what to do if someone falls, including a demonstration of how to 'talk someone up' from the ground or floor. These films can also be embedded in any communication materials, including your website. If you would like the embed codes, please get in touch.

If you are advising families and carers of technologies that may be helpful to them, the Digital Health and Care Institute has recently published 'A Review of Digital Technology Solutions to Support Caregivers'. The report identifies digital solutions – both services and tools/products - which are currently available on the Scottish and UK market to support caregivers.

Go to NHS inform for the most up to date COVID-19 Guidance.

Staff Wellbeing

Whether working on the frontline or having to spend more time at home, distanced from relationships and routines that we know, it is vital we keep ourselves mentally healthy. There are a number of online resources providing mental health and wellbeing support for staff during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Psychosocial mental health and wellbeing support for staff on the Turas website includes information on looking after yourself, looking after your staff and looking after others.

SAMH also has an information hub which provides Coronavirus mental health advice and support.