

Optimising the Uptake of Telecare: An Overview

Briefing Note
Nov 2021

Optimising the Uptake of Telecare

Descriptor

Telecare describes the use of technology and equipment both within and out with the home to remotely monitor changing needs, lifestyle changes, risks, and emergency situations. It provides alerts and information to an alarm receiving centre or direct to a carer/family member to enable an informed response.

Telecare provides cost-effective, responsive, unscheduled, urgent, and emergency care and support by contributing to the effective management of risk. It can enable people to live safely and independently at home, and support hospital discharge.

Telecare equipment raises the alarm; however, it is remote responders (call handlers in alarm receiving centres) and in-person responders that enable safe and effective use of telecare. It must be noted that any significant increase in uptake of telecare services will require a proportionate increase in resources and capacity to deliver the service, including call handlers and in-person responders, as well as telecare installers.

A telecare service can supplement the provision of home care, or can be a person's main source of support from HSCP care services. All HSCPs across Scotland provide telecare services in some form but there is variation in scope, configuration, and delivery.

Telecare uptake currently varies across HSCPs. The [Telecare-Feasibility-Study-Report-2017](#) highlights the opportunity to increase uptake of telecare across **all** HSCPs. It cites some of the barriers to uptake as public and staff awareness about telecare, charging for telecare, and the availability of responder services. Public Health Scotland data from 2018/19 indicates that the percentage of people in receipt of home care who also receive telecare varies across HSCPs from 36% to 79%. Some HSCPs have considerable scope for increased uptake.

Find out more by going to the [Public Health Scotland Social Care Insights Dashboard](#), select the 'Home Care' tab at the top of the page, then 'Alarms and Telecare' on the right of the next page.

All HSCPs charge for the provision of a telecare service. This can be a barrier to uptake, but also enables people to have the choice of telecare as a preventative measure, giving confidence and reassurance to the person using telecare and their family.

Approaches to increasing telecare uptake include:

- Introducing a charge-free introductory period.
- Promoting the use of the Self Check Online Telecare tool.
- Routine consideration of telecare to support hospital discharge.
- Increasing awareness and knowledge of telecare and developing/improving assessment skills for telecare in the multidisciplinary team (MDT).