Living well with a long term condition

If you or someone you know is living with a long term condition, you’ll know that sometimes life’s not easy. A long term condition can be anything from asthma to multiple sclerosis. This leaflet contains information and advice about equipment that can help you live independently and manage your condition better.

Telehealth
Telehealth is a small unit which enables you to take your vital signs from the comfort of your own home.

You take readings such as blood pressure, oxygen levels, weight and temperature and they are automatically sent via telephone line to a monitoring centre. If your condition gets worse this will be picked up and your healthcare professional will be contacted to take appropriate action.

Telecare
Telecare is a system of wireless sensors placed around the home, which immediately detect risks such as fires, floods and falls. The moment a risk is detected in your home environment, you could ask about a falls detector. This can be worn on your wrist or waist. If the moment a risk is detected an alert is sent to a telecare monitoring centre, where an operator can quickly contact a named carer or the emergency services. Caring for others

For example, if someone gets out of bed and doesn’t return for a long time, there are sensors which can send an alert via a base unit in their home to a call centre, where an operator can quickly contact a named carer or the emergency services.

Telecare services can help reduce some of the pressures and help support you and the people you care for. For example if someone gets out of bed and doesn’t return for a long time, there are sensors which can send an alert via a base unit in their home to a call centre, where an operator can quickly contact a named carer or the emergency services.

Some of the benefits telehealth and telecare can bring are:
- Added peace of mind
- Greater understanding of your condition
- Less risk of unplanned admissions to hospital
- Greater freedom to get on with your day-to-day life
- Less anxiety for carers and family.

Staying Independent in your home

Millions of people in the UK live with ill-health, injury or disability. One of the many challenges associated with this may be a fear of falling. Telecare can help support you and increase your independence by helping to manage the risks to your health and home environment.

For example, if you are at risk of having a fall in and around your home, you could ask about a falls detector. This can be worn on your wrist or waist. It works by sending an alert via a unit in your home to a call centre if you fall, and an operator can quickly contact a named carer or the emergency services.

Managing your medication

As the number of medications you take add up, it can become difficult to remember to take them on time. This can result in under/over dosing and unscheduled admissions to hospital. A portable medicines dispenser can alert you, by way of a ringing/flashing alarm, to take your medication. The dispenser is ideal for people who require a prompt to take their medicines and act as a reminder to carers who are supporting someone to take medication throughout the day/nights.

We could do with something to remind us to take our medication at the correct times.

How can I be alerted when my daughter is having a seizure?

I can arrange for your daughter to have an epilepsy sensor and show you how to use it.

I can arrange for your wife to have a fall detector.

I’m worried my wife will have a fall and I won’t be able to hear her when I’m gardening.

I can arrange for you to have a medication dispenser.

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Managing your health with telehealth

Being diagnosed with a long term health condition can have a huge impact on your life. Often, the symptoms associated with the illness are just one of the things that affect your health – many people also lose their self-confidence and grow anxious when they think their condition is getting worse. Telehealth is proven to help people with a long term illness, such as lung and heart conditions, to take control and regain their independence.

Telehealth enables you to monitor your health at home or even on the move. You can take your own vital signs such as heart rate and blood pressure, as well as answer a series of questions about your symptoms. These details are then sent to clinicians who can monitor your health remotely and help you when you need it.

How telecare works

- Alert received at response centre
- Personal trigger or telecare sensor raises alert
- Home unit
- Operator decides appropriate course of action
- Response from keyholder or emergency services

More information

This leaflet will help you start exploring the self-care choices that are right for you. To find out more about the support available, visit www.nhs.uk/YourHealth

For other information on how to access NHS services call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47.

Carers can contact Carers UK via CarersLine on 0808 808 7777 or online at www.carersuk.org for support.

Many local libraries have specially trained staff to help you find information about your local health service and show you the information on the NHS website.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Whether you’re a patient, a relative or a carer, PALS can answer questions and resolve concerns. Call NHS Direct to find out where your local PALS is. Whatever your issue – just ask.

www.nhs.uk
0845 46 47

For more information about telehealth and telecare please visit 3millionlives.co.uk or ask your health or social care professional for more information.

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How telehealth works

- Clinician alerted if appropriate
- Monitoring devices
- Monitoring centre: data assessment and triage
- Secure data transfer
- Vital signs and interview answers
- Patient portal