

case study



Sector: Social Care

Client: Essex County Council

Application: Implementing a large scale, mainstream telecare service

the challenge

The demographic trend is particularly acute in Essex, with the Tendring area having the highest level of over 65s per capita in Europe. The demand created by the **large increase in over 65s and 85s in particular** (61% and 131% respectively from 2004 to 2029) will require care spend **budgets to rise by a factor of three** just to maintain services at their current level. This is obviously not sustainable and Essex has identified the need to change the model of provision.



Essex County Council

Telecare provides the opportunity to not only give people what they want, namely maintaining their independence in their own homes, but is expected to cost the council less than traditional models of care, thereby releasing funds to cope with increasing demand.

This case study describes how Essex came to have one of the most successful mainstream telecare services in Europe.



Case study highlights

- Mainstream telecare service offered **free to everyone over 85**
- **Substantial investment** in telecare and support of **£4m** 2009-10
- Successful evaluation demonstrates **substantial savings**
- **Dedicated** telecare assessor training
- Total of **16,000 service users** (@ Jun 09) across 9 Carelines in Essex
- **475 people** are issued equipment per month on average

All the reassurance you need

Tunstall



Gary Raynor

“Essex has some daunting demographics with many people living alone. Therefore our strategy had to be fit for the future and we had to find creative solutions for individuals that promote independence. We knew that we needed to use more technology in the applications it is good at, and by doing so release people to do what they are good at. We also needed a cultural shift from ‘Find and Fix’ to ‘Predict and Prevent’.”

Essex took the leap of faith from the beginning

Essex had a good understanding of telecare from being involved in the Northamptonshire Safe at Home dementia research project in 2004/5 as the control group who did not receive telecare. The results included:

- People from the Essex control group left the community sooner and in greater numbers: they were four times more likely to leave the community than Safe at Home users.

This had a profound and powerful effect on senior management and when the Preventative Technology Grant (PTG) was introduced in 2006 (£1m+) the council immediately ring-fenced the money internally and got to work setting up the infrastructure required for a mainstream service from the start.

The impact of implementing a large scale, mainstream telecare service across Essex

the process

Essex’s telecare success would not have been possible without senior management saying that this is the way forward and making it a policy in Essex which fed right through from the grass roots of every day working life.

Essex’s **mainstream** telecare service works in partnership with all 9 local monitoring centres and currently **supports over 16,000 users** - the youngest user being 11 months and the oldest is 107.



Ambitious Essex strategy offers telecare free to everyone over 85

Essex County Council’s budget for 2009-2010 sets out their vision to deliver the best quality of life in Britain. Entitled **“EssexWorks”**, residents and stakeholders were widely consulted in the development of the strategy and of the **£87m** of new investment, **£4m is dedicated** to telecare equipment and support.



There are over 33,000 over 85 years in Essex.

This new money is dedicated to **offering new users aged 85 and over a free telecare service for one year**. It covers the installation, equipment and careline connection. After the first year, there will be a small weekly service fee ranging from £1.50 to £5.80 depending on monitoring and response services received.

If you are under 85, Essex continues to pay for the provision of telecare (covering installation and the sensors) for the first twelve weeks of service. The service user is responsible for the ongoing monitoring/response charges.

Using a mix of operational and prevention monies Essex is able to extend services from critical and substantial to many with moderate needs also.

Telecare is the answer and we chose Tunstall because we needed a partner, not a supplier. A company that whilst having the full range of products, also offered end-to-end support, innovation and the experience to support Essex with such a large scale roll out."

Gary Raynor, Telecare Development Manager

key success factors - advice for others embarking on the journey

Paperwork

A key element in making the process of telecare easy was that paperwork was changed, ensuring that every care assessment included a telecare assessment.

Cultural change

There was still a cultural change to address but one of the big triggers to improving the lack of referrals was the launch of the service with a large conference for 300 people. A good selection of internal and external speakers took part to raise knowledge and awareness but it also got care staff really energised as between each formal speaker, a practitioner stood up and talked about their experiences with telecare.

One care professional said *"When I first found out about telecare I initially thought it wouldn't catch on and I didn't trust it. But I thought I had nothing to lose by trying it, and the team helped me with a service user in the early stages of dementia who also had COPD. She had several hospital admissions and lived with her daughter who was finding it increasingly difficult to cope. She is now living back in her own bungalow supported by various telecare sensors and the daughter is so relieved to know that the system prevented a hospital admission and she herself has got her life back. I now know that it isn't just a new fad that will go away."*

Infrastructure/process

You have to have the infrastructure in place before you start commissioning the service. If something goes wrong, the story becomes folklore and it can be very damaging. So it's absolutely vital to have stock, delivery and installation process, assessment forms, referral routes etc all in place before you start training the teams. Front line teams are under a lot of pressure and they need to know the process works smoothly.

Training programmes - Telecare Approved Assessor

Another big success factor is the one day assessor course. This regular approved assessor training is aimed at people in every sector including social care, health, carelines, home improvement agencies, housing, charitable sector workers e.g. Alzheimer's Society. Based in Colchester, so far over 1,600 (June 09) front line people have attended this free one day telecare course, covering products, FACS criteria, and the basics of how to assess, with an exam at the end. Due to feedback Essex now runs 2 hour masterclass advanced refresher courses, 3 sessions per day, in 3 different parts of the county.

Show home

The PTG money was utilised to set up two demonstration units, one a flat in sheltered accommodation which is specifically for telecare and a combined telecare, environmental control and assistive technology demonstrator within an Independent Living Centre. About 3,000 people a year go through the main show home which contains a mock up of a bathroom, bedroom, lounge and kitchen.



Show home kitchen



Show home bedroom

Team structure

Originally it was thought that there should be a telecare expert in every team but this was never achieved due to constant staff changes over approximately 40 teams. Essex's role for telecare development is pan agency and anyone who has contact with frail vulnerable people is trained to the same standards.



Carbon Monoxide
Detector



Smoke Detector



Lifeline Connect+



Flood Detector

outcomes

Preventative telecare slows down the rate of transfer to residential or institutional care and gives people a better quality of life for longer coupled with choice of tenure.

Costs and Benefits

An evaluation in Essex based on 240 users showed significant cost savings in care support services.

From the total users, every tenth user was chosen as a random selection and the social worker was asked what would have happened if telecare had not been available at the time of commissioning. The costs below are actual robust savings at the time of commissioning telecare and are minimum savings as they don't take into account savings down stream such as potential A&E, ambulance, hospital and transition cost savings.

For all 240 sample users

- For every £1 spent on telecare £3.82 was saved in traditional care*

For those users where telecare was a direct replacement for traditional care

- For every £1 spent on telecare £12.60 was saved in traditional care*

*real costs at time of commissioning

NOTE: 7 people (3%) out of the 240 sample users were diverted from residential care

Impact on carers

Although it is unlikely that someone who is in contact with social services is likely to recover completely, the benefits of telecare are readily accepted by carers, because it eases the burden on them. When someone becomes a carer, the relationship between them and their loved ones changes over time, in that the person they are caring for may be seen as dependent. The carer then spends their time carrying out often intrusive checking. This can be resented by the recipient. Over time it can become an imposition to both and carer exhaustion is a prime reason for residential admission. If a telecare solution is installed the carer knows they will be informed if there is a problem automatically. The care recipient knows they are being cared for and that help is available 24 hrs a day - this takes a great deal of worry away from both parties.



Cllr David Finch Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Community Wellbeing said:

"The Telecare pledge is at the heart of the county council's belief that our elderly residents should have the right to the best possible quality of life, the freedom to stay in their own homes and the ability to make their own choices about their future care.

Essex has a growing elderly population and we have a responsibility to ensure that they feel supported during their later years."



"In Essex the demographic challenge is more severe than most and we are committed to telecare as a means of providing choice and control to our population. The telecare pledge, where we are offering a free service for a year to our over 85 year olds is yet another example of our commitment to service user independence. We are also confident that the savings telecare brings will allow us to provide more services to a greater number of people."

Jenny Owen, Executive Director Adults, Health and Community Well-being

Case study - Support for Alice with a learning disability

Alice is 25, has moderate learning disabilities and lives at home with her parents. Her main areas of concern are the risks of falling due to epilepsy and taking medication. Alice really wanted to live independently but her parents were nervous and uncertain of her ability to manage various aspects of day to day living. However Essex's policy is if you understand the risk you should be able to manage it.

In order to reassure the parents and to get them used to the idea of telecare, a Lifeline, smoke detector, fall detector and a medication dispenser were offered. These items were programmed to contact mum on her mobile phone should an alert be raised. Alice could take control of her own medication regime prompted by the reminder and dispenser. To date Alice hasn't missed a medication giving her mother the confidence to say yes to letting her live independently but will also support Mum and Dad to have some respite from their caring role. Mum hopes to find employment or further her own education, an aspiration which was difficult whilst Alice lived with them.

Case study - Mrs B support following a stroke

Mrs B is an 83 year old lady with a history of frequent falls following a CVA. She has difficulty with her speech and is partially sighted. As her condition deteriorated she was becoming increasingly forgetful and was referred to the Social Care Team for Assessment for telecare equipment.

In February 2008 a fall detector and a bed sensor were installed at the property. Since installation the fall detector has been activated 30 times with 5 of these being times when Mrs B had fallen. The bed sensor activates most mornings as Mrs B gets up to make a drink and takes it back to bed with her. She has got used to a Careline Controller asking her if she is 'ok'! 3 times she has fallen in the morning as she has got out of bed and as the bed sensor has activated a call through to Careline, help has been sent to her straight away.

Gary Raynor explains the partnership with Tunstall

- It is vital to work in partnership with a supplier with a broad range of products
- I need to know that I can get hold of skilled people to support the roll out in Essex
 - Tunstall has in depth technical skills and support based "in county" and people available at the end of the phone who are able to come and assist us
 - At the beginning the support side was arguably more important than price
- It was important that I had a supplier who can deliver training at both an operational and technical level.
- I needed a partner able to work closely with the carelines who have been lifted from traditional community alarms providers to broad telecare providers.
- The marketing experience that Tunstall was able to provide is helping us with introductions in other areas.
- Because we were mainstreaming from day one, Tunstall was able to advise on what worked and what didn't work from their existing contacts throughout the UK.
- Tunstall were there with appropriate support at the time we needed it.

future services

Most people have now got the hang of telecare sensors so there is now a more intelligent use of CCTV, telemonitoring for improving the quality of the assessment, more complex use of telecare for learning disabilities and telehealth.

Essex remains committed to individual budgets and self directed support, and sees telecare as an integral part of commissioning care.

For further information
please call 01977 660206



what are the next steps

The EssexWorks Public Pledges were launched on 1st April 2009 and run for one year.

Essex evaluation summary

EssexWorks Pledges are -

Our People

- We will improve the quality of our school buildings by investing an additional £10million in maintenance and refurbishments
- We will offer telecare equipment free for one year and support to Essex residents over the age of 85 enabling them to live safely and independently in their own home
- We will make available a £1million 'life raft trust' to keep open a range of Essex attractions during the economic downturn

Promotion of the telecare Pledge

Essex produced an eight page telecare supplement which was distributed in June 2009 via the EssexWorks magazine - the county publication that reaches 650,000 homes. So far 500 people have been issued with telecare in Essex in the first 10 weeks as a result of the Pledge.

Our Economy

- We will upgrade and refurbish local communities' roads and footpaths with £10million of additional investment
- We will support Essex businesses through the downturn by thinking local, buying local
- We will further reduce bureaucracy, freeing up £35million for investment in frontline services

Our World

- We will increase recycling of waste to over 45% in 2009 and to over 50% within the next three years, in partnership with the District and Borough Councils
- We will improve the appearance of Essex's coastal paths, gateways and verges
- We will deliver, with Essex Police and partners, ten local operations to reduce crime and antisocial behaviours in identified areas

what does the future hold for Essex?

Currently Essex has no plans to repeat or extend this offer, however it doesn't mean they won't continue. Essex is planning a thorough academic evaluation to fully understand the impact of the Pledge. Experience to date implies there is no doubt that it will be successful, but because this is a blanket provision by age as opposed to assessment only, the cost evaluation may not be as impactful as the 240 sample.

The Essex Pledge of offering telecare free to every 85 year old and over, is one of the most ambitious telecare mainstreaming strategies in the world today and one which will reap rewards for years to come.

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