

Protecting victims of domestic violence

The challenge

Domestic violence will affect one in four women and one in six men in their lifetime, and two women are murdered every week. How is Telecare Cardiff helping to support victims of domestic violence, and give them an easy means to summon urgent help from anywhere in the home, 24 hours a day?

What we did

Sarah* is a 26 year old victim of domestic abuse, who lives with her two year old son. Her ex-partner was soon to be released from prison, and had previously broken into her property with a weapon. Sarah was very anxious, and concerned for her safety and that of her son.

A telecare system was installed in her home. This included a Lifeline GSM unit, which doesn't require a landline connection so can be used anywhere, and an emergency pendant, which acts as a mobile panic button. Sarah can keep the emergency pendant with her at all times, and press it if she needs help. No matter where she is in her home, if the pendant is activated it will raise an alert at Telecare Cardiff's Control Centre, silently dialling via the Lifeline GSM. Specialist operators can then hear activity in



the home, and speak to Sarah via the Lifeline unit if this is appropriate. The system will also record any calls, and this evidence is admissible in court if required.

Five months after the systems was installed, the Control Centre received a call from Sarah via the Lifeline unit. The operator couldn't hear anything, and so followed protocol and called 999. The police responded immediately and quickly arrived at Sarah's house to find her ex-partner attempting to smash down her front door to gain entry.

Results

Sarah's ex-partner fled the scene as soon as the police arrived, and was later arrested. Sarah's front door was repaired and she is now secure, and continues to have the reassurance that help will arrive quickly if she presses her emergency pendant. Having the system in place meant Sarah received help quickly enough to avoid her or her son being harmed. It may even have saved her life.

*Not her real name.

“ Victims may not be able to access or operate a phone in the event of an incident of domestic violence. The telecare system enables them to press a single button that they can have with them all the time, and know that help will arrive at their home as quickly as possible, even if they're not able to communicate.

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