

The Hertfordshire Telecare Service

Stephen's story

The Hertfordshire Telecare Service supports almost 4,000 people in Hertfordshire to live more independently in their own homes. Telecare systems use discreet sensors in the home to automatically call for help in the event of an emergency, such as a fall. Users can also press the button on a pendant worn on the wrist or around the neck to call for help. Calls will be answered by friendly, professional operators at a specialist monitoring centre which is open 24 hours a day, every day. They will call a nominated contact, such as a neighbour or family member, or if they cannot be contacted will send a British Red Cross Responder or the emergency services, depending on the situation.

Here's an example of how the service helped Stephen*:

Stephen has complex physical conditions resulting in poor mobility and the risk of falls. He lives with his father who has dementia, which means he doesn't always understand his son's condition, and was continually pressing the help button on the Lifeline unit when he was trying to use the telephone. Their relationship has deteriorated to the point where Stephen is afraid to report any concerns as he fears his father will remove him from the property.

A British Red Cross responder visited Stephen and his father, and suggested that the Lifeline unit was moved away from the phone to prevent further confusion, and suggested Stephen get a mobile phone for when he is out. The responder also showed Stephen's father how to answer the phone. The responder discovered that Stephen was finding his father difficult to cope with, and felt lonely and isolated. The responder escalated the case to the social work team who arranged to visit him at a time when his father would be out.



A British Red Cross responder with a service user

Stephen has now met with his social worker and received an occupational therapy assessment, with a view to him having help and equipment at home to help him be less dependent on his father, as well as opportunities to get out more. Stephen has bought a set of cordless phones so that he and his father can answer the phone to help avoid inappropriate use of the Lifeline. The responder also requested that an Adult Social Care review be completed for Stephen's father as his condition is deteriorating.

The Hertfordshire Telecare Service has resulted in both Stephen and his father receiving more appropriate support, which will help them to remain independent at home for longer.

<http://hertfordshiretelecare.co.uk/>



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