

# SCOTTISH COUNCIL COST SAVES £14K WITH VIRTUAL TEC SUPPORT TO SINGLE SERVICE USER

## SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

TSA™



## The Challenge

Mr C is a charming individual in his late 50s who has learning disabilities and he lives in a rural area in Scottish Borders. He has always lived with his parent, who was his main carer, but sadly, a year ago, Mr C's parent passed away. Mr C needed extra support as he couldn't cope without his parent's care and support. The traumatic experience of losing his parent also resulted in a decline in his mental health and wellbeing.

Mr C needed welfare checks and help with mealtimes, especially at night as he was not eating or drinking properly due to his emotional decline. He also lost a lot of independence as support workers were coming in and out of his property.

The large geographical location of the Scottish Borders means the average round trip for a staff member is around 1 hour, resulting in increased costs for care. Paul and Derek, leaders at Scottish Borders Care (SBC) were keen to support Mr C with activities of daily living yet wanted to promote his independence.

## The Solution

To help offer a more enhanced service to Mr C and reduce staff travel times, SBC introduced Ethel, a comprehensive platform that helps you remotely support vulnerable people in their own homes. Ethel includes a large, touchscreen device that is tailor-made for those with little or no computer experience. It can help promote independent living, reduce social isolation, and support chronic care management in a person's own home. As part of the care package, they automated daily reminders through Ethel to promote independence in Mr C's daily living.

Staff were able to virtually 'sit' with him while he ate his sandwiches at lunchtimes. "Tuck-in" visits were made at night-time to ensure that he had eaten that evening and to check on his wellbeing. SBC was able to monitor Mr C's daily activities and physically seeing Mr C via video calls made a huge difference during wellbeing calls.

Mr C loves music and through Ethel he was able to listen to his favourite music which further improved his wellbeing.

# The Results

SBC's innovative hybrid model of care, which included Ethel, enhanced Mr C's care package. Lunchtime calls, "tuck-in visits" and wellbeing calls were all completed via video calling, which reduced travel time and costs for staff.

Ethel helped Mr C regain some independence and he even began checking Ethel for daily reminders and messages. Mr C's wellbeing improved due to the virtual visits from staff and being able to listen to his favourite music.



# Cost benefits

Using Ethel, SBC staff were able to virtually visit Mr C **reducing travel time and costs**, without reducing the support Mr C received. They were able to enhance Mr C's care package and yet there was a realised cost savings of approximately £14,300 per year.

This innovative hybrid model meant SBC was able to increase their staff capacity by redeploying staff who were able to concentrate on clients who needed in-person care visits.

As a Council, we are using Ethel to reduce our medication prompt, meal prompt and welfare checks visits. This has enabled our staff to concentrate on valuable personal care visits at a time when all local authorities in the UK are struggling to recruit care staff.

"The Ethel team are great to work with and Scottish Borders Council could not be happier with the service that we are receiving from everyone at Ethelcare. We would recommend any care provider that is thinking of using Ethel to take the opportunity to use this technology during this challenging time for the care industry.

**Derek Boyle**  
Scottish Borders Cares



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