

TELECARE PROVIDERS / MONITORING CENTRES

Information sheet for Ambulance EOC staff

- Thousands of third-party telecare calls are made to 999 and 111 every day.
- More than two million people across the UK have a telecare/pendant alarm that can be pressed, or sensors that send an alert, to get help.
- There are over 200 telecare monitoring centres that answer telecare calls.

The Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) and TEC Services Association (TSA) are designing a **triage tool** that telecare providers (TCPs) will be able to use as a standard to ensure their callers receive the most appropriate response. This is still in development and will be piloted before being released nationally. This complements our work aimed at safely reducing avoidable conveyance.

In the meantime, these notes are to assist your understanding of what to expect and do when receiving a 999 call from a TCP.



Commonly, a telecare alarm trigger is worn on the body, usually around the neck, or on the wrist. The person presses the button on the trigger to get help, especially if they fall and can't get up. When the TCP receives an alarm, they can talk to the person through a speaker. Many other types of telecare and telehealth devices are also available – go to 'Find TEC Services' at <https://www.tsa-voice.org.uk/>.

Users will press telecare alarms for the following reasons: falls/help needed/unwell/lonely/fire alarm/GPS device/movement or door sensors. They may also come through to the monitoring centre as a **silent call** - where the caller is unable to hear or speak (they may be some distance from the speaker used to communicate with them), making it difficult for the call-taker to find out what is wrong.

Communication can be limited, and the person may not be able to use the phone in the normal way. They may not be able to answer an incoming call if either the TCP or the ambulance service need to call them back. In sheltered, or grouped accommodation, the system may be communal and the person themselves may not have their own phone line. In these situations, **conversations with the ambulance service may need to take place via the TCP.**

Where possible, TCPs will consider contacting alternatives such as family, neighbours, or the use of 111 and other services before 999. HOWEVER, they often struggle to get enough information from the person to be able to decide an alternative option to 999.

Telecare customers are commonly older people, may live alone, may be at risk of falls, could be hard of hearing, have dementia, be on the floor and sometimes have difficulty in communicating. Alternative responses to falls should be considered, where available. Some, but not all TCPs, have a **mobile responder service** or **alternative response team**. Where they do, they will usually deploy them before calling the ambulance service.

On taking a call from a TCP, try and **get a contact number for the person**, so that clinicians can ring back the patient/carer and do **further triage** to determine the right response, but please remember this may not always be possible. Also get the **name and telephone number of the TCP** reporting the incident, as they could be outside your operating area. Follow your local protocol to document or **record the call as being from a TCP** (mode of call) - this will help us monitor calls from TCPs into 999.

