

# case study



**Sector:** Telecare

**Client:** Wrexham County Borough Council

**Application:** Supporting Dementia Care



## the challenge

The 2001 Census for Wrexham indicated that:

- 11% of people described their health as “not good”
- Nearly 28,000 described themselves as having a limiting long-term condition
- 6% were permanently sick or disabled
- Over 11% provided informal care, with over 3000 of them spending over 50 hours a week caring for a relative or close friend

In Wrexham it is expected there will be a **15% increase** in the number of people aged **65 – 79** by the year 2012, and a **20% increase** in those aged **85 and over**.

All the reassurance you need

**Tunstall**

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## Dementia Care

Mental health conditions, such as dementia, are common in older people and one in every four families is affected in Wrexham. Dementia can be used to describe a number of symptoms including a decline in memory, reasoning and communication skills. It can also refer to a gradual loss of skills needed for independent living, which are experienced by many older people. There are a number of risks to the individual associated with dementia in the home, the most common being falls and walking about, which often occurs at night.

## Carers

There are approximately 150,000 people in the UK with dementia who live alone in their own home, many of who rely on support from an elderly carer. This person may be a relative or spouse and often they have a number of health issues of their own. The impact of caring for someone can be physically, mentally and emotionally draining to the point where their own health suffers. In these circumstances the solution provided by a traditional care model would be to move the person into a nursing home or residential care. By introducing a tailored package of telecare at an early stage, it can facilitate independent living and allow the person to remain in their own home for longer.





*“As an Occupational Therapist in the Community Mental Health Team for Older People, the aim of treatment is to keep people independent and active, ideally in their own homes, and the risk reduction provided by telecare is the foundation of that potential quality of life and independence.”*  
Diane Edge, Occupational Therapist

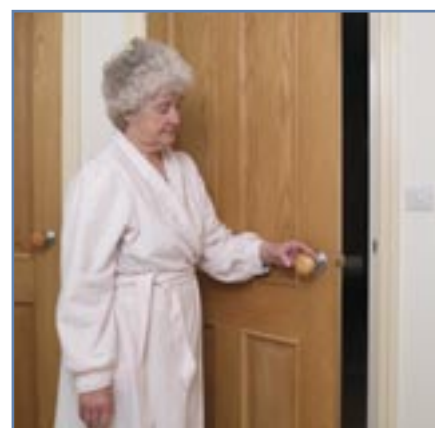
## the process

Telecare sensors including smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, flood detectors and gas detectors are placed around the home to support the individual by managing risks associated with their condition. A tailored package can be designed to match each person's requirements to minimise the impact of any incidents and support independent living.

60% of people with dementia experience walking about as a problem, and these incidents are very distressing for the individual and family members. A carer cannot realistically watch someone 24 hours a day but telecare can help reduce the risk of them leaving the home at unusual times.

With a simple solution consisting of property exit sensors on external doors, combined with movement sensors, an alarm can automatically be raised with a monitoring centre or carer if the person leaves their home late at night.

Providing constant care for someone has an impact on an individual's time, independence and health. Carers often feel invisible and they don't have any time to themselves or anyone to support them. At the same time the person they are caring for loses some of their independence by always being looked after. Telecare gives peace of mind to carers, allowing them to have a good night's sleep and pursue their own interests, safe in the knowledge that if an alarm is raised they will be alerted. This relieves some of the pressure placed on carers, whilst restoring independence and dignity to the individual.



Property Exit Sensor



Movement Detector



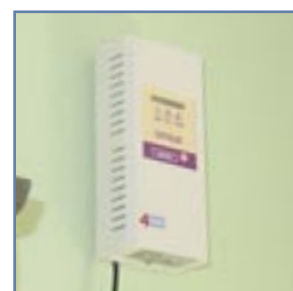
Smoke Detector



Carbon Monoxide Detector



Flood Detector



Gas Detector

For further information  
please contact marketing  
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## the results

The Joint Community Mental Health team in Wrexham has considerable experience in developing telecare services to support people with cognitive impairments.

An evaluation of a pilot by Wrexham Care and Repair showed the vast majority of service users and their carers thought very highly of the equipment provided. One carer said: *"The property exit sensor is a God send. I've been able to have a proper nights sleep for the first time in 6 months."*

Diane Edge, the Occupational Therapist responsible for setting up the dementia project, is now training and supporting other professionals to perform assessments for Wrexham's telecare service. She is extending the provision of telecare to cover other vulnerable groups, including those at risk of falling, and social isolation due to anxiety or fear of crime. According to Diane: *"As an Occupational Therapist in the Community Mental Health Team for Older People, the aim of treatment is to keep people independent and active, ideally in their own homes, and the risk reduction provided by telecare is the foundation of that potential quality of life and independence."*



Telecare delivers constant reassurance for the individual with dementia, as they know that any incidents in the home will automatically trigger an alert and they will receive appropriate support. As their needs change over time, the telecare package can be adapted to take other factors into consideration, creating a truly unique solution. Carers also benefit as telecare relieves stress by providing constant support and peace of mind.

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