

Herefordshire Careline Annual Report 2017





Introduction

Welcome to our annual report for 2017. This report is designed to keep our customers informed about how we are performing and what has happened at Careline over the past year.

Our Careline service provides reassurance to over 38,000 people nationwide and is a real lifeline to people who need our help. We answer around 38,000 calls per month and these vary greatly in nature from people who have had a fall to people asking us to contact their family.

Our alarm installation and maintenance service plays a crucial role in our service with our operatives installing alarms in people's homes across Herefordshire and Shropshire. Our installation team provide a demonstration of how the equipment works in the service users own home and answers any questions that may arise; we believe that providing an informative installation helps new customers to feel confident when using the alarm.

Within the report is a comprehensive overview of our service and we have also taken the opportunity to tell you about our most recent contract successes which puts us firmly as one of the top 10 providers in the UK.

If you have any questions then please get in touch – we would love to hear from you! On behalf of me and the team, I would like to thank you for your continued subscription to the alarm service and rest assured we are here for your 24 hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year

Best wishes,

Simon

Simon Herdsfield, Head of
Wellbeing & Support
for the Independence Trust,
Herefordshire Careline



Our performance in 2017

We pride ourselves in answering your calls quickly and responding to alarm installation & maintenance requests in a timely fashion. We are constantly monitoring how we perform to ensure that we do not fall below the very high standards that we work to. Our targets are set by the Telecare Services Association (TSA) under their Code of Practice and we are audited on these annually.

Call volumes and answering times

Total Calls Handled: 426,145

Calls answered within 60 seconds (target: 97.5%):
98.6%

Calls answered within 3 minute (target: 99.0%):
99.8%

Line Utilisation

Our Monitoring Centre is equipped with modern call handling technology and is designed to be able to handle the large amount of calls that we receive. We have installed multiple telephone lines to ensure that calls are routed to us correctly and with enough capacity. We monitor the amount of lines that are utilised by the call volumes we encounter and the TSA specifies that this must be below 50%. We are pleased to report that during 2017 our line utilisation was just 14%.

Operator call quality checks

We pride ourselves on delivering the highest standard of call handling that provides the level of support and reassurance our customers need. Our operators go through intensive training to ensure they deliver excellent customer service.

To ensure that we are checking the quality of our call handling we review 2 calls handled by each operator every month. Our Careline Team Leaders undertake the reviews by listening to the recordings of the calls (all calls made to and from the Monitoring Centre are recorded) and determine whether they have been handled correctly and to our high standards.

During 2017 we completed 100% of all operator call checks, which meets the standards set out by the TSA.

Installations & Maintenance Service

We carry out a lot of alarm installation and maintenance visits throughout the year, responding to people who need an alarm and responding to faults with equipment. It is essential that we respond to requests for alarm installations promptly to help people to remain independent in their own home; particularly important when people are being discharged from hospital.

Our installation team provides a maintenance response service to ensure that alarms that develop faults can be quickly rectified and put back in working order. We have purchased a mobile fault reporting tool to enable our operatives to receive details of faults in the field using emails on tablet devices. This helps our team to respond quickly to maintenance calls and also helps to reduce carbon emissions by reducing unnecessary trips back to the office.

We are pleased to report that we have exceeded the TSA targets for installations and maintenance visits:

Percentage of urgent alarm installation referrals received and responded to within 2 working days (target 90%): **100%**

Percentage of non-urgent alarm installation referrals received and responded to within 15 working days (target 90%): **100%**

Percentage of critical alarm faults reported and responded to within 2 working days (target 90%): **100%**

Percentage of non-critical alarm faults reported and responded to within 2 working days (target 90%): **100%**

Key Safes

After requests from new and existing customers, we now supply and install Supra C500 key safes. The C500 are police approved and provide a secure method to store keys if they are needed by carers or emergency services. If you would like further information please give us a call on 01432 384100 and they will be more than happy to discuss your requirements with you.





Surveying our customers

To help us improve and monitor the quality of our service we conduct an annual customer satisfaction survey. We carry this out each winter and it is carried out alongside our annual data check to verify your details for the alarm service. The survey asks questions regarding our service and asks for a rating for quality, speed of response, helpfulness of operators and value for money. The survey also includes an opportunity for our customers to provide feedback on our services and suggestions on how we can improve.

2017 Survey Results

This year's survey was conducted on a sample of 1,665 service users of which 776 replied by the deadline therefore a response rate of 47%.

99% of our customers were very or fairly satisfied with the service

98% thought it provides value for money

100% said operators are helpful

99.6% said operators are friendly

97% said we responded quickly enough to the call

Summary of comments received

Installation Team

The gentleman who installed my alarm was very courteous and couldn't have been more helpful

Your gentleman was very informative and helpful. I would recommend him

Well informed and helpful representative

Careline

*The service provides a valuable link to the emergency services when needed over 24 hours!
Gives family members peace of mind*

A very good service which I have not had cause to use in an emergency. Always useful to know I can contact somebody quickly if needed.

Careline services give me security of knowing there is someone to help if I need it.

Although I've not used the service in an emergency its good to know you're there and gives my daughter & son in law peace of mind

As yet I have had no reason to use this service but as my family has peace of mind as I am on my own most of the time I can get quick help its worth paying for

We are full of praise for the service which is professional and friendly and would like to pass on many thanks to everyone who mans the system. They have been particularly understanding when my mother has kept her fingers on the alarm so causing multiple back-to-back calls

Excellent reassuring service would recommend to anyone

This service is valuable to those of us who live alone and with failing health. The response is always courteous and reassuring. Thank you.

Operators are fantastic. Responder service gives real peace of mind

I can't think of anything to add except to say thank you for being there and caring.

...you are my security blanket!

Responding to complaints

We try to ensure that we work to the highest of standards and provide excellent customer service, but sometimes things do go wrong. However, we have a detailed complaints policy and procedure for handling any issues customers may have.

The standards required under the TSA for complaint response are:

100% of complaints responded to within 5 working days –
[Our performance: 100%](#)

100% of complaints replied to every 20 working days during investigation – [Our performance 100%](#)

Achievements in 2017

As we reported for 2016, Careline was awarded 2 new contracts; South Cambridgeshire District Council and Bridgend Borough Council. Mobilisation of these contracts started in the spring and we have now successfully transferred 4,100 connections.

Due to the increase of alarm connections we have run successful recruitment drives through the year increasing operator numbers and analysis has been completed to adjust shift times reflect busy periods ensuring the demands of the new contracts do not affect the service received by any of our customers.

Connexus Group

As you may be aware Careline was part of the Herefordshire Housing Group – in July this year Herefordshire Housing became part of the newly formed Connexus Group.



Connexus brings together two successful housing groups: Herefordshire Housing and Shropshire Housing to support people, create places and working in partnership with like-minded providers to help our customers reach. This will not affect the service you receive from us but you will notice a new logo on paperwork we send out to you.







Responder Service

Our Responder Service continues to grow with a steady increase in alarm users and their families realising the benefits of the service. Perhaps for those that do not have family members close by or for those times when their trusted individuals are unable to respond or when the service user does not wish to bother them. The Mobile Responder Service offers alarm users and their families the peace of mind that in these instances our dedicated team can help and will personally visit your home to ensure that you are safe and well.

- Average Response Time **26 minutes**
- **93%** of calls attended within 45 minutes
- **99%** of call attended within 60 mins

At present the service is only open to customers in Herefordshire but we continue to work with partner agencies to explore the possibility of extending the service to Shropshire.

TSA Accreditation

As members of the TSA (Telecare Services Association) we adhere to the TSA code of practice. The accreditation for telecare control centres ensures that all services carried out are reliable and consistent for all our customers. We have held accreditation for Monitoring since 2000, Installations since 2011 and in 2015 we launched our Responder service which received accreditation within the same year.

On the 16th January 2018 the TSA conducted their annual audit of our services and for the second consecutive year we received no improvement needs and the auditor commented:

“This is a well led Telecare business where quality is embedded; colleagues are skilled and experienced, and a wide range of complimentary wellbeing and support services are available. There is an ambitious and well-articulated strategy focused on growth, sustainability and delivery.”

The TSA has launched the Quality Standards Framework (QSF) which will replace the Code of Practice. The QSF enables service providers to demonstrate quality and offers commissioners much needed reassurance in an otherwise unregulated industry. The emphasis is shifted away from measures which have little bearing on quality to a more “outcomes” focused approach.

Next Steps

The focus for Careline in 2018 is to build upon the success of 2017 and we will explore new opportunities that will add additional benefit to our existing customers.

We are committed to continuous improvement with technology and will ensure we receive upgrades to our monitoring platform when they become available.

Our Installation and Monitoring Team are already looking at trialing new equipment that will offer greater independence to our alarm monitoring customers and we look forward to sharing these with you during 2018.

The whole team will be working towards the TSA's Quality Service Framework ready for a full 3 year audit in January 2019.

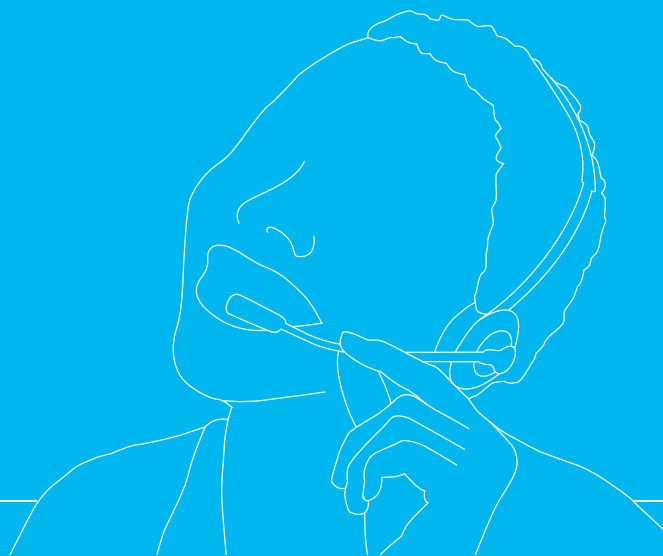
Further Information

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual report for 2017. If you would like any further information on the contents of this report or anything to do with Careline please contact us at:

Careline, Herefordshire Housing Group,
Legion Way, Hereford, HR1 1 LN

Telephone: 0345 863 8323

Email: alison.rawlings@connexus-group.co.uk



Head Office

- > Herefordshire Housing Ltd, Legion Way, Hereford HR1 1LN
- > Telephone 0300 777 4321 > Fax 01432 384198
- > Email info@hhl.org.uk > Website www.hhl.org.uk