

Meeting of:	<b>Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Tuesday, 08 June 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Healthy Living and Social Care
Report Title:	Telecare Services Update
Purpose of Report:	To update Members on the work of the Telecare Service over the last 12 months and advise Members on the progress of the Telecare Service Management Review
Report Owner:	Director of Social Services
Responsible Officer:	Operational Manager – Locality Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Adult Services; Head of Policy and Business Transformation; Operational Manager, Customer Relations; Team Manager – Intake & Assessment Team; Telecare Manager; Project Manager – Telecare Review
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telecare continues to be an integral element of the Care and Support services in the Vale of Glamorgan: Enabling people to live independently at home for as long as possible by offering reassurance and support to family carers; by providing valuable information relating to the health and wellbeing of citizens to professionals and family; and by providing early/timely access to emergency support.</li> <li>• The Telecare Service has continued to operate throughout the Coronavirus pandemic. Telecare was recognised to be a useful safety mechanism in such circumstances. An early decision to remove the installation charge at the beginning of the pandemic has seen a significant increase in the number of customers during the year.</li> <li>• The Council is committed to increasing the number of Telecare service users and the range of service options. This will give more people the opportunity to benefit from the preventative interventions provided through Telecare and for the service to offer up to date technologies.</li> <li>• Adult Services in partnership with Customer Relations, have commissioned a review of the Telecare Service. This commenced in December 2020 and was due to be completed by 30 March 2021. The scope of the review is to give assurance of the safety of the current service, alongside exploring alternatives to recommend improved operating models for the service fit for the future. The review has reported on an interim basis whilst finalising the recommendations.</li> </ul>	

## **Recommendations**

1. That the work and future developments of the Telecare Service are considered by Scrutiny Committee.
2. That Scrutiny Committee receives annual updates on the work of the Telecare Service.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

1. To appraise Members on the challenges, opportunities and strategic direction of the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Telecare Service.
2. To keep Members apprised of the work of the Telecare Service and the Telecare Service Management Review.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Vale of Glamorgan Council's Telecare Service supports citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan to live independently in their homes through the provision of an accessible alarm system that alerts carers/professionals in times of need. The Telecare Support Team is responsible for the promotion and development of the service and the installation and maintenance of the Telecare equipment. Once installed, all telecare alerts are responded to by the Contact One Vale Telecare Operators 24hrs per day, 365 days per year.
- 1.2 Telecare makes use of an analogue base unit connected through an individual's home telephone landline, which can link to a personal pendant and a range of environmental sensors; these link to the 24/7 monitoring centre at Contact One Vale.
- 1.3 The Telecare Service is split into three main parts (figures based on 21/22 prices):
  - TeleV is the standard telecare service in the Vale and normally carries a flat rate installation charge of £60.50, with a weekly charge of £5.40, which is subsidised by the Supporting People Grant by £1.30, leaving a weekly charge to the customer of £4.10. TeleV consists of a base unit, pendant/wrist press button alarm and smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector. TeleV is available to all citizens of the Vale of Glamorgan and is seen as preventive measure. Therefore it does not require a social services assessment.
  - TeleV+ offers an enhanced range of personal detectors such as fall detectors, bed/chair detectors, GPS, epilepsy detectors and environmental detectors such as door sensors, nightlights and flood preventers. TeleV+ is a Care & Support service as defined under the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and is only accessible through a social services assessment. The maximum charge for the service is £9.00 per week, reduced to £7.70 if eligible for Supporting People funding. However, the customer's contribution to the cost is

calculated through a Financial assessment which takes into account any other Care & Support services and the person's financial circumstances up to a weekly cap of £100, which is set by the Welsh Government and reviewed annually.

- Council Housing – The Telecare Community Alarm Service links into certain designated Council's housing stock, supporting 1,016 tenants living in Council housing. Since 2019, the option of having telecare has become voluntary leading to 69 customers choosing not to have the service.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

### **2.1 Installation Charge**

- 2.1.1 At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, utilising Emergency Powers the Director of Social Services sought permission to remove the installation charge for all new Telecare customers, in order to attract new customers. This action was taken with the intention of providing reassurance to family members of their loved one's wellbeing during the pandemic. It was also hoped that this would provide additional support and a safety mechanism for at risk citizens during the pandemic. This has resulted in increased installations of TeleV. Between April 2020 and December 2020 there were 268 TeleV installations compared with 198 between April 2019 and Dec 2019, an increase of 35%.
- 2.1.2 The installation of the telecare equipment demands a high investment of time and resource from the team. This has been covered by the installation charge. The team were initially concerned that a free installation would lead to an increase in the number of early cancellations, but in fact the service has seen a reduced termination rate during this time, leading to an increase of TeleV customers from 1,066 to 1,166 individuals.
- 2.1.3 A second concern about removing the installation charge was a potential loss of income. The 268 installations would have normally produced an income of (268 x £60.10) £16,106.80. However, the removal of the installation fee is considered to have generated a larger number of customers than otherwise would have been the case, with 100 new subscribers. This has generated an additional (£4.05 x 52 x 100) £21,060.00 in revenue for the service during the period of April 2020 to Dec 2020. This is in addition to any potential savings made by preventing an increase in a person's domiciliary care.
- 2.1.4 It is recommended that the Telecare Service continues to operate without an installation charge during the current pandemic and/or until the completion of the Telecare Review.

### **2.2 Covid-19 Response**

- 2.2.1 The essential elements of Telecare (remote monitoring, rapid access to support and carer reassurance) are seen as complementary to 'face-to-face' domiciliary care when developing a care plan to help a person with care and support needs remain living in their own home. This has become particularly important during

the Coronavirus pandemic as it facilitates additional reassurance for families that their loved ones are monitored around the clock, when they themselves cannot be available.

#### 2.2.2 An example of the support the Telecare Service provides:

- Mrs G is an 86 year old woman was referred to Telecare to support her hospital discharge as she was at risk of falls when moving about her home. Unfortunately, Mrs G contracted Covid-19 while in hospital, but rather than delay the discharge and in liaison with Mrs G's daughter, the Telecare Support Officer installed the equipment including a bed sensor prior to her return home. Once home, the telecare package was reviewed, and a wrist-worn fall detector was provided instead of the bed sensor. This has provided Mrs G and her daughter the reassurance they both needed to feel able to return to their independent lives.

2.2.3 As stated earlier the Telecare Support Officers have continued to install telecare equipment by undertaking home visits following Covid-19 safe working protocols throughout the pandemic. The only concession made to avoid lengthy periods of time in people's homes was the temporary stopping of the installation of smoke detectors at the same time as installing the lifeline alarm. Smoke detectors were provided for customer's self-installation where appropriate. This decision was made upon an assessment of the risk of harm from coronavirus compared to the risk of harm from fire. This assessment is under constant review as the coronavirus risk changes.

2.2.4 The team has been challenged by significant sickness levels during the last six months but is grateful for the support of officers repurposed from the Adult Services Intake & Assessment Team who have been able to undertake installations of telecare equipment for all new TeleV and TeleV+ customers; and from officers from the Exercise Referral Team who have been able to undertake minor repairs and equipment collections. It is important to note that without the support of the repurposed staff, the Telecare Service would have been seriously compromised during the pandemic.

2.2.5 It is also worth noting the additional benefits the repurposed staff have afforded the team: The Exercise Referral staff have taken the opportunity of offering wellbeing and movement advice to Telecare customers during their interventions where appropriate and are available for consultation with the wider Intake & Assessment Team when offering wellbeing advice to people calling into Contact One Vale. The Social Care Officers from the Intake & Assessment Team have developed a greater understanding of the benefits of Telecare when undertaking Social Services and Wellbeing Act Assessments, thus avoiding the need for a secondary Telecare assessment.

### **2.3 Telecare Review**

2.3.1 A comprehensive Review of the Telecare Service has been commissioned by the Head of Adult Services and Head of Policy and Business Transformation and is being carried out by business improvement partners who were engaged utilising grant funding on a related programme. This allows an independent and

objective overview of the service. A presentation providing details of the review is at Appendix 1.

2.3.2 The review is working to the following aims:

- Further establish and promote the service, focussing on its safety and positive customer experience.
- Explore development opportunities including the use of new technologies, processes and partnership opportunities.
- Evaluate the service in respect of current priorities such as Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Parliamentary Review of Health & Social Care.
- Consider the placement of the service in the landscape of current health and social care provision in the Vale of Glamorgan such as Wellbeing hubs, Community Liaisons, Vale Community Resource Service (VCRS) and Falls Prevention.
- The review gathers feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including social care referrers, telecare customers and their families and the Telecare staff from both the Telecare Support Team and the 24hr Telecare Operators.

2.3.3 The review followed recognised project management methodologies and is reaching its conclusion, with interim findings as below:

- **ICT Architecture:** The current ICT architecture is based around an out of date monitoring platform and in-premises servers with analogue alarm units, which poses a significant risk to the future of the service if left undeveloped.
- **Digital Transition:** The nationwide digital transition is helping to shape the future of Telecare Services across Wales toward 'cloud' based solutions that are better able to adapt to the developing health and social care environment.
- **Service Structure:** The service straddles Adult Services and Customer Relations which poses management challenges leading to potential service and training gaps across the Telecare service.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Telecare is ideally suited to support people to maintain their independence within their own homes with the aim of delaying any potential escalation of need for more traditional care and support, but also in supporting people with existing care and support needs to take more control over their care and their day to day lives.

2.3.4 Currently, an Options Appraisal is being developed to recommend solutions to the findings listed above. These include:

- **ICT Architecture:** Upgrade or procurement of digital Telecare Monitoring Platform.

- **Digital Transition:** Utilise existing technology alongside stand-alone solutions to meet individual need while working towards timely upgrade or procurement of digital Telecare Monitoring Platform.
  - **Service Structure:** Review the existing 'team' structure exploring the potential development of one cohesive team/integrated structure, focusing on management (operational and strategic) training and support programme for the team.
  - **Health and Wellbeing:** Develop or procure a Wellbeing Response Service and/or further integrate the promotion and implementation of telecare referrals throughout the Vale Locality Services.
- 2.3.5 The Head of Adult Services and Head of Policy and Business Transformation will continue to work with the Telecare team, and liaise with internal teams (such as Supporting People), to progress and conclude the review of the service. It is recommended that Scrutiny Committee receives annual updates on the work of the Telecare service.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

#### **3.1 Long Term**

- 3.1.1 The Council's commitment to developing the Telecare service represents a focus on the long-term wellbeing of individuals using the service and also the sustainability of social care by reducing or delaying demand on care and support services.

#### **3.2 Integration**

- 3.2.1 The Telecare service supports an Active and Healthy Vale by providing safeguards and early warnings to enable people to live independently. The service operates from the Contact Centre which provides not only social care but access to a range of community health services.

#### **3.3 Collaboration**

- 3.3.1 The Telecare service is a collaboration between social services, the Council's contact centre and the UHB through the provision of TeleV+.

#### **3.4 Prevention**

- 3.4.1 Telecare is known to support people to live independently and give confidence to carers so they can take a break. This helps to maintain people's caring relationships which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the carer and the person being cared for.

## **Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 3.5** The Telecare service continues to perform within budget and develop a reserve fund for future equipment maintenance and costs. Any service developments to improve the service and increase the number of Telecare users must remain within budget.
- 3.5.1** The additional costs associated with the digital switchover will need to be met from within the Telecare revenue budget and the Telecare reserve fund.

### **Employment**

- 3.6** There are no employment implications as a direct result of this report.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 3.7** There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report

## **4. Background Papers**

14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – Telecare Services Update

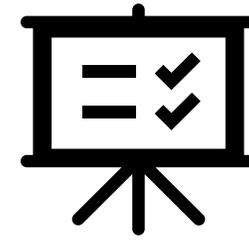
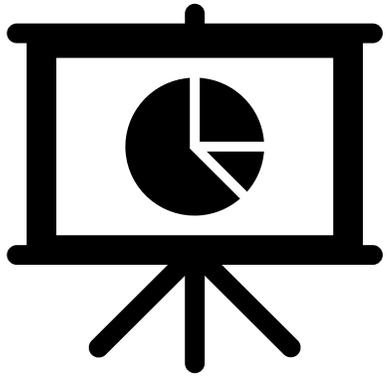
5<sup>th</sup> February 2019 – Telecare Services Update

4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – Telecare Services Update

10<sup>th</sup> October 2016 – Assistive Technology & Dementia Task and Finish Group – Update

7<sup>th</sup> March 2016 – Assistive Technology & Dementia Task and Finish Group – Update

9<sup>th</sup> March 2015 – Assistive Technology & Dementia Care Task and Finish Group

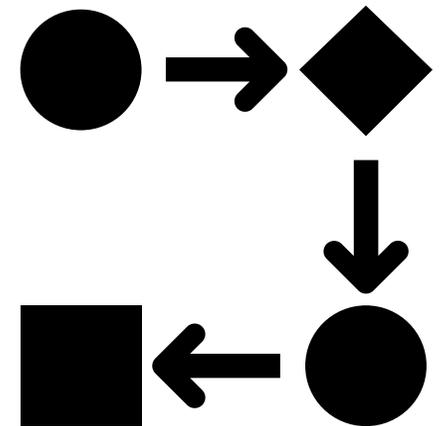


# Telecare in the Vale of Glamorgan

*Management Review Plan 2020-2021*

## Feedback from staff and management

- Initial surveys
- Conversations with management
- Conversations with staff
- Public surveys



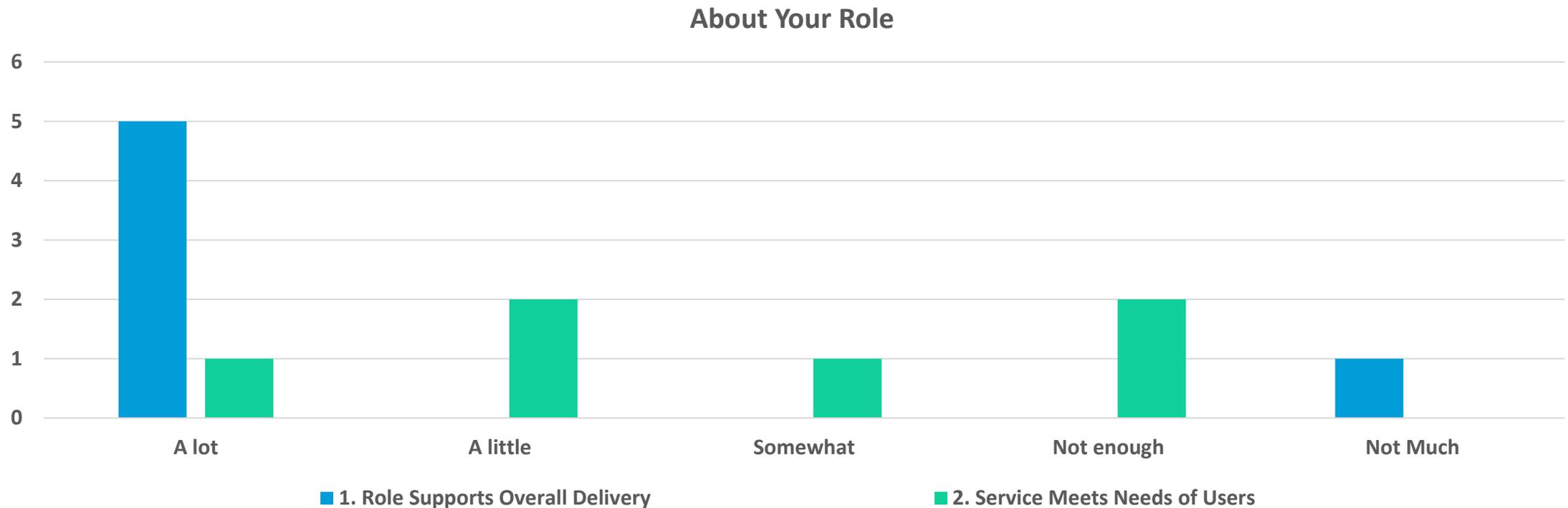
# Where did management feel the most improvement was needed?

- Clunky and inflexible systems and technology
- Technical knowledge and experience among staff and managers
- General capacity and contingency within service
- Relationships and awareness between existing staff groups
- Need for refreshed processes and procedures
- Capacity for service development
- Not using up to date assistive technology
- Updating information held in multiple systems
- Reporting on progress from multiple systems
- Packages and charging structure



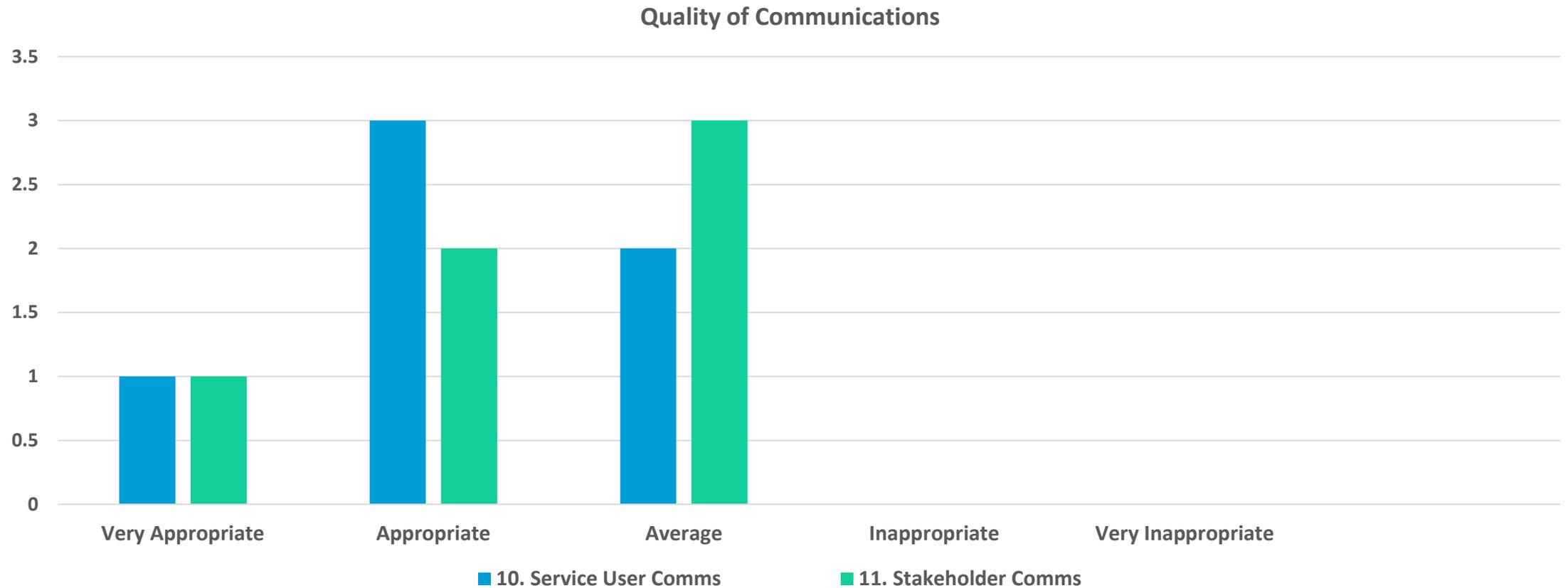


We asked staff how they thought their role supported the overall delivery of the service. We then also asked how well they thought the service met the overall needs of its users...





We also asked staff about the quality of communications, both to service users and stakeholders...



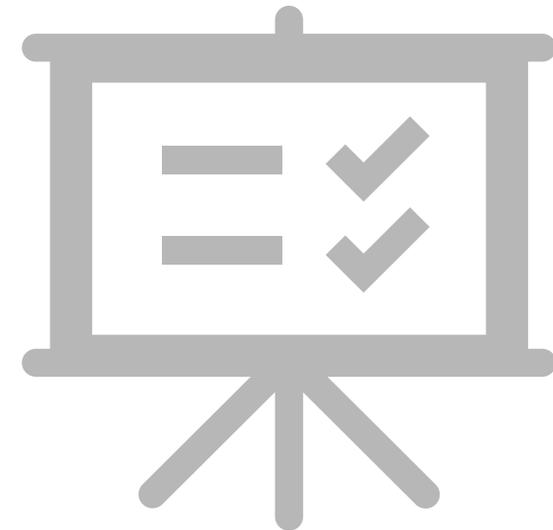
**Staff were asked to compare the service to competitors and describe where it succeeds...**

## **POSITIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Same-day handling of issues

Specialised options in TeleV+

## **FAST INSTALLATIONS**



*Word Cloud – the bigger the word the more respondents mentioned it*

...they were also asked where the service could be improved.  
Everybody who responded mentioned the need for a

# LIFTING/WARDEN SERVICE

As well as...

## CAPACITY & CONTINGENCY

Training to provide the service

Information given during installations

Online access to information and requests

## FLEXIBILITY WITHIN PACKAGES

Equipment tracking



*Word Cloud – the bigger the word the more respondents mentioned it*

Staff were also asked what attracted them to a role within Telecare...

**MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

*(to the lives of vulnerable people)*

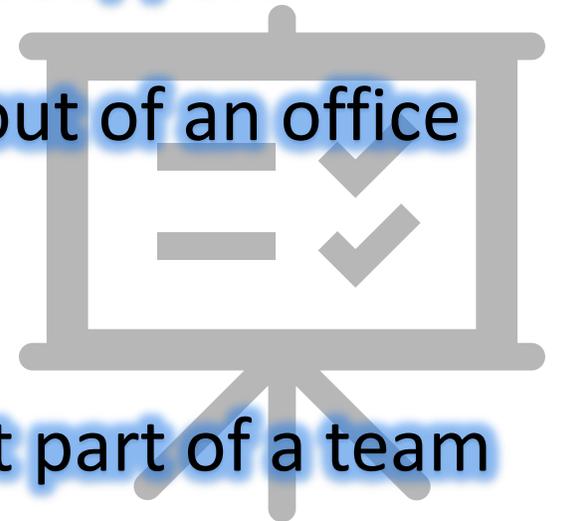
**FLEXIBLE SHIFT TIMES**

Potential for progression in a role that provides care and support

An opportunity to meet people out of an office

Understanding how to better meet care needs

Working on solo objectives whilst part of a team



*Word Cloud – the bigger the word the more respondents mentioned it*

Staff were then asked where they believe the service could have done more to support an individual...

## RESPONDING TO FALLS

*No clients having to wait on the floor for an ambulance*

Proactive and responsive management of packages with regular monitoring to ensure they continually adapt to needs

More robust induction training to ensure that service users don't need to wait too long to have their needs met



**Staff were also asked when they feel they could have done with more support in delivering the service... *(some of these responses refer specifically to the COVID period)***

**Providing cover for other duties without enough preparation or support from experienced officers**

**Management not visibly using existing information from difficult situations to make proactive changes to delivery**

**Better understanding of TSO role**

**Training on processes and systems**

**Understanding of management responsibilities**

**Capacity to cover staff especially when many are WFH**



*Word Cloud – the bigger the word the more respondents mentioned it*

# Communications

## Where are we communicating well?

- Working in partnership with social services and the NHS
- Solid handover process in place between operators
- Day to day customer services are always positively regarded among both staff groups

## Where do we need to improve our communications?

- Improved front-door to services that makes sure telecare is properly recommended
- Improved awareness among wider social work teams of how service works
- Debriefing operators after traumatic calls e.g. suicide or dementia
- Introduction of a handover process between operators and TSOs
- Advancing different access models e.g. online/audio described

# Service Improvement

## Where do staff we feel we could do better?

- Unified and strengthened training process across both staff groups
- Updating information held in systems more diligently
- Better training for handling difficult situations (e.g. suicide/dementia/bereavement)
- Regular wellbeing catchups with managers and staff (using real examples)
- More flexible package types and retain reduced fee structure
- Ensuring that there is sufficient support while on-shift

*Many staff also said they would strongly benefit from  
One team - One process*

# What do the people who use the service think?

## 1. How do residents feel about the response of the service?

1	Overall Percentage	Percentage adjusted to remove "no response"
Very Satisfied	53.85%	67.46%
Quite Satisfied	10.03%	12.57%
Satisfied	13.62%	17.06%
Remaining percentage of respondents recorded "Unsatisfied or Very Unsatisfied"		

**100% of staff respondents cited 'helping people' as a reason the role was attractive to them**

## 2. How do residents feel about the call handlers themselves?

2	Overall Percentage	Percentage adjusted to remove "no response"
Very Satisfied	56.07%	72.84%
Quite Satisfied	8.66%	11.25%
Satisfied	10.56%	13.72%
Remaining percentage of respondents recorded "Unsatisfied or Very Unsatisfied"		

**100% of staff respondents had a positive story of going above and beyond to provide a quality service**

**96% Would Recommend Service**

*Survey data from 2019*

# What did staff respondents say people would ask for from the service in future?



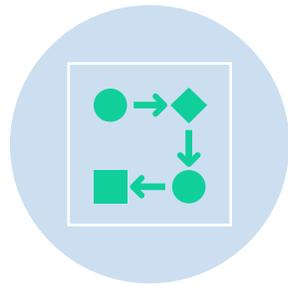
## Merged responsibilities

- The same staff carrying out their whole journey from query to installation to monitoring



## Proactive use of packages

- Flexible monitoring and updating of packages alongside other care options



## Tailored access and services

- Online query/referrals
- More customisation within packages



## Improved integration with care planning

- Part of social care/wellbeing 'front door' process

*Stage 2 will involve more detailed conversations around key areas*