



Contour Homes Telecare Case Study:

Contour Homes one of the North West's biggest social housing providers is investing in a number of initiatives that look at supporting anyone who wants to continue to enjoy independent living. Such is its commitment to this initiative it has seconded Sheltered Housing Management Officer Dawn Thornber to look at ways of improving the Telecare system to provide a more personalised service.

"Contour Homes has around 1600 sheltered units," she said. "The company is keen to forge ahead with Telecare and develop services that meet the personal needs of residents. I have been seconded to work with several local authorities in the region to co-ordinate what's on offer, look at improving services and create greater efficiencies that benefit the end user."

63 year old Gordon Skidmore provides a great example of how Telecare can work in practise.

Gordon already has support needs when in May 2005 he was diagnosed with diabetes. He had to take medication three times a day. However, by August 2007 the Contour Homes scheme manager raised concern that the medication was not being taken correctly.

Dawn said: "Contour Homes tried several ways to remind Gordon to take his medication, using a prompting service and mobile wardens. This was not only costly but also intruding on Gordon's privacy and independence. It also had implications about the times he could attend a day centre – which he really enjoys."

Early this year Dawn arranged for Gordon to be assessed by Telecare. It was agreed that Gordon should have pill dispensers which was relatively easy to organise.

"The difficult part came in trying to find a chemist to fill it," said Dawn. "The scheme manager took it upon herself to contact virtually every chemist in Bolton and the surrounding area requesting that they would fill it—but to no avail. The chemists weren't prepared to take the risk. Their concern was that the dispenser may not be tamper proof."

Eventually Numark Pharmacy in Bolton town centre agreed to pilot the idea and within a few weeks it was up and running. The tamper proof issue was easily resolved by the pharmacy holding the keys for the dispenser.

Gordon is delighted with the new way of working. It takes away the worry of forgetting, he tests his blood sugar by himself every couple of weeks and his health has improved. The pill dispenser may be a small thing but it has given Gordon control of his own situation and maintained his independence.

“A pill dispenser may seem almost insignificant,” said Dawn. “However by taking the time and trouble to do this, we have saved the cost of 2 daily visits from a home care worker. Gordon still has to have some home visits - but not as many - and the time they spend with him now is not taken up with deciding on whether or not he has remembered to take his pills.”

Gordon has written a poem to express how he feels about the new service (attached) and has also become involved in helping Numark Pharmacy advertise their service - resulting in meds delivery services for other residents.

“Whilst Telecare provides considerably more sophisticated electronic devices to monitor the health and safety of vulnerable people in their own homes,” said Dawn, “this example demonstrates that it can actually be quite human. Residents don’t have to worry about whether or not they have taken medication. It gives them dignity, control and independence and that’s what Telecare is all about.”

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Gordon and his meds dispenser

What can I tell you about The ‘Do do’
etc and I suppose dot com.
It’s a weird looking thing, an aerobatic CD
That has it’s origin from the back of beyon.
It’s the ruler of each day
Just to keep this guy in full throttle
A silent master or mistress
To tell the time to do or time when you should do time or nottle!
It’s like a bossin’ law that delivers chemicals –
The pills.
That I need each day
Just like the clock upon the wall
It will not go away.
At one time only yesterday
Or maybe’t day before;
My life was free
And I lived for me
And I couldn’t ask for more
Except a brew of tea
But now it’s carousel
Each morning

Cum another hell or heaven
Cos' it re uses you each night at nine
And each morning at just gone seven
Then it innocently shrugs of the guilt
As if nothing has happened
To carry on
With all that's been and gone
To let you live life's pattern
Oh the summer and the springtime
Show off their gown s of wonder
But the dominoes must watch the clock
Cos it's tek your tablets
Or GO UNDER!!!

Notes to Editor:

Contour Homes is a subsidiary of Contour Housing Group which is one of the region's largest registered social landlords. It has 20,000 properties under its ownership and management across 27 local authorities and operates a number of subsidiaries developed through stock transfers.

As well as physical development of properties Contour Housing Group is particularly proud of its regeneration work which has seen the Group working with numerous public/private partnerships across the North West creating great places to live for its diverse customer base.

Contour Housing Group's values consist of service excellence, trust, inspiring people, valuing one another and excellence in business.

www.contourhousing.co.uk

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