



Annual Report 2012



Foreword



Vitaline, a department of Blackpool Council, has continued to deliver a successful year of service to clients throughout 2012. Its 24 / 7 service helps people to live independently and safely and is provided to in excess of 5000 clients.

Our core business is the provision of a monitoring and response service through the use of Telecare and Telehealth technology. We also provide a Lifting Service for clients who have fallen but are uninjured and a Falls Referral service that is designed to prevent further falls by referring people to other community based support services. In addition we are the Council's 24/7 emergency response centre.

One key advantage of the service is that, in an emergency we provide a personal response. Many alarm providers offer a remote response but our service is locally based and we attend at a client's home in response to every emergency call.

We also provide an out of hours monitoring and emergency response for several other organisations including for Blackpool Coastal Housing's sheltered tenants and Great Places Housing Group's extra care sheltered housing establishments at Tulloch Court and Elk View.

2012 saw us retain our accreditation with the Telecare Services Association (TSA), the national trade body. We achieved accreditation for parts 1, 2, 3 Monitoring, Response and Installations plus Service Tailoring. TSA inspections are stringent and cover every aspect of the service; it is an intense and challenging annual process with the inspectors examining all policies and procedures, shadowing staff, listening into phone calls. To achieve and retain accreditation we have to satisfy the inspectors that we meet all required standards.

We are particularly pleased to achieve "service tailoring", accreditation because in order to achieve this we had to prove that we consult with each individual service user to establish his/her personal requirements and needs in order to be able to arrange a service around them.

We regularly invite customers to comment on our services by sending out service evaluation questionnaires. (See Appendix 1 for results for the year 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2012)

Amid a backdrop of national economic uncertainty Vitaline has continued to perform, to grow and to deliver an excellent service. We intend to continue to do so throughout 2013 and beyond.

Margaret Seddon
Manager



Key Statistics 01/01/2012 to 31/12/2012

During 2012, in addition to 87,545 routine monitoring calls Vitaline handled 115,751 that required an emergency response.

Our aim is to at least achieve and ideally exceed the emergency response standards set by the Telecare Services Association which are;

- To answer 97.5% of calls within 1 minute
- To answer 99% of calls within 3 minutes
- To produce an exception report for any calls taking over 3 minutes to answer.
- To provide a mobile response in an emergency with 45 mins.

Our results for 2012 are as follows;

99.46% of emergency response calls were answered within one minute -with an impressive 97.78% being answered within 30 seconds. 99.97% of all calls were answered within 3 minutes. The remaining 0.03% were equipment test calls.

Vitaline's average mobile response time during 2012 was 14.5 minutes, well within our service target of 20 minutes for a mobile response.

Equipment Installation

Our aim is to at least meet and where possible exceed the Telecare Services Targets for equipment installation which are;

- 9 out of 10 urgent installations completed within 2 working days. 10 out of 10 within 5 days.
- 9 out of 10 non urgent installations completed within 15 working days. 10 out of 10 within 20 days.

Urgent Installations

After discounting exceptions where delays were caused by issues outside of Vitaline's control (e.g. No telephone line, delayed release from residential care or hospitalisation) 100% of installations took place within 2 days of referral with some being done the same day and many the next day.

Non Urgent Installations

After discounting exceptions where delays were caused by issues outside of Vitaline's control (e.g. No telephone line, delayed release from residential



care or hospitalisation) 100% of Installations took place within 15 days of referral with vast majority being done within 2 days.

Critical/Non Critical Repairs

Vitaline adopts a faulty equipment exchange policy so irrespective of the fault being critical or non critical faulty equipment is replaced within hours of it being reported.

Complaints and Commendations

During the year Vitaline received 3 complaints and 72 commendations. After investigation one complaint was upheld and resulted in a change of procedure and two were not upheld.

Vitaline has been shortlisted for the Council's Outstanding Service Awards. The results will be announced early in 2013.

SERVICES

Vitaline provide range of assistive-technology services, below is a short summary of these and the impact it has on local people's lives.

TELECARE

Vitaline's refreshing and pioneering approach to the way technology benefits society is helping the UK lead the field in Telecare. The aim of this service is to support independent living and each Telecare package is tailored to the needs and wishes of the client. Initially, Vitaline and social care staff assess each case so that the best mix and match of sensors can be provided. These can range from the most basic pendant alarm to the latest wireless technology which includes bed, chair and door sensors plus environmental alerts including gas, flood, smoke or CO2 detectors. We can even fit equipment that will shut off the gas supply if an escape is detected by a gas sensor e.g. from an unlit cooker.

Telecare may be provided free, subject to a social care assessment to those who meet set criteria. It is also available privately from as little as 48p per day. All our charges are fully inclusive with no hidden extras and regardless of how many times the service is used.

Please contact us for further details



Among the benefits, Vitaline's Telecare can provide:

- Early detection of emergencies and a fast response to them
- Early detection of lifestyle changes that may indicate deterioration in health
- The opportunity to address problems at an early stage before they become acute
- A sense of security and peace of mind for the client

These benefits can prevent, or delay admission to hospital or residential care and support Blackpool Council to make the most effective use of available resources.

The benefits of Vitaline's 24 hour operation, not only to monitor but to physically respond to calls, are immense.



How Vitaline Assisted Two Clients in 2012:

Telecare story-Mrs H-Natural Gas

A gas detector call came through to the control centre indicating that there was either a leak or an unlit appliance at the property. The client however stated that there was no gas smell in the property and that all appliances were turned off.

As per Vitaline procedures a mobile responder was sent to check and reported that they could smell gas from outside the front door; it was discovered that the client had gone to bed leaving the gas to the cooker switched on but unlit; a gas fire was also switched on and lit in the lounge.

The mobile alerted the client and assisted her outside to get some fresh air. Control centre staff contacted her son and Transco attending to check appliances.

It is entirely possible that had the Telecare device not alerted the control centre, the gas escape, along with the lit gas fire could have resulted in a serious and potentially tragic situation.

Telecare Story-Mrs O'D

Mrs O'D lives alone and suffers with Alzheimer's disease. Telecare sensors have been installed at her property since 2010.

A smoke detector call was activated early in 2012; the mobile responder was deployed along with the Fire Brigade. Mrs O'D had been cooking chips and the pan had caught on the hob. There was an extensive fire in the kitchen. Mrs O'D was taken to hospital for a check up.

Had the smoke alarm not been connected to the Vitaline control centre this almost certainly would have accelerated into a much more serious incident.



TELEHEALTH

Vitaline, in partnership with NHS Blackpool, provides a Telehealth service that, in one patient's case, provides treatment that has never before been delivered outside a hospital setting.

Telehealth is delivered in other parts of the country but by combining its benefits with Vitaline's 24 hour-a-day monitoring and emergency response operation a whole new service is created. Vitaline works closely with community based nursing services to deliver this service which is basically the measurement of vital signs by the patients themselves through the use of home based technology that sends the information to Vitaline who, in turn, alert medical professionals if anything untoward is indicated.

Telehealth is a monitoring and not an emergency response service however Vitaline has added value to it by providing, at no cost to the patient, a Silver Telecare element, thus ensuring that all patients, in addition to Telehealth, have access to emergency response 24/7.

FALLS REFERRAL PATHWAY AND LIFTING SERVICE

In partnership with NHS Blackpool and Lancashire Ambulance Service, Vitaline has established an advice, signposting and referral service for people who have suffered a fall. It also provides a Lifting Service for people who have fallen or slipped at home but who are uninjured and just need assistance to get up. Initially the Lifting Service was available only to people who were in receipt of other Vitaline services but it has now been extended to the wider local community.

During 2012 we attended at 1411 falls thus saving the equivalent number of calls to the ambulance service, leaving them free to direct their services elsewhere.

The service goes further than just a lifting service; within 24 hours of attending a fall or if we are contacted by the ambulance service who have concerns about someone they have attended we make a welfare check call and invite the client to answer some questions that are aimed at reducing the risk of further falls. Depending on the answers and with their permission Vitaline will send a referral on their behalf to other community based services who can offer preventative support.

Examples include:

- Community Matron for mobility and medical problems;
- Care and Repair for environmental problems.
- Social Services for aids, adaptations or needs assessment



All Vitaline staff are fully trained in assessment for injuries after a fall and all falls that Vitaline attend are reported to patient's GP.

Future development to Lifting Service

Currently Vitaline staff lift people with the aid of a Manga Elk Lifting Cushion but many people fall in awkward positions where it is not possible to use the cushion and so the ambulance service has to be called to assist.

From early 2012 North West Ambulance Service will provide training for Vitaline staff in the use of new equipment which will allow them to lift without using the cushion thus further relieving demand on the ambulance service and stress for the patients

PARTNERSHIPS

Vitaline works with a range of bodies in the public, private and third sectors. The service enjoys excellent relations with the other departments within Blackpool Council and our partners at NHS Blackpool.

Increasingly Vitaline is working with Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. Our project with them involves close working with the Fire Prevention Officers and involves cross referrals between us e.g. if we feel that one of our clients would benefit from the installation of free smoke detectors or from some fire safety advice, with their permission we contact the Fire Service on their behalf. A Fire Safety Officer then visits the client. Conversely if the Fire Service meets someone who they feel would benefit from the Vitaline service they refer to us.

Another key partner is Blackpool Coastal Housing which is the Arms Length Management Organisation for Blackpool Council. They have diverse responsibilities, one of which is the management of the Council's 20 sheltered housing schemes. Vitaline provides a monitoring and emergency mobile response service to the tenants both out of hours and in hours in the absence of the Scheme Manager.

A new and exciting partnership has been forged with Great Places Housing Group where Vitaline has two contracts to provide a monitoring and emergency response to their extra care sheltered housing schemes at Tulloch Court and Elk View.



SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Vitaline is committed to improving the wellbeing and safety of those wishing to live independently in their own home. The vast majority of those at risk have no formal contact with the social care system and so miss out on the benefits' the Vitaline Service can provide. Our main objective for 2013 is to increase our engagement with this group of people so that they, and those that care for them, can have peace of mind.



COMMENTS FROM CLIENTS AND FAMILIES

Thank you very much, my mum feels very safe knowing she can get help when needed. As I live away it's also given me peace of mind. Well done! and thanks.

The lady who came when I needed help was very helpful and pleasant

Thank you, a wonderful service with very caring and professional staff

Thank you very much for your help. Margaret was back on her feet quickly and painlessly, couldn't be better

Sadly I am moving away but to me your service was invaluable, I could not speak more highly of you.

We appreciated the call to daughter in law too.

I recommend Vitaline unreservedly. I cannot fault it at all, it makes me so much safer.

Thank you very much for an excellent service. I feel so secure in my home now.

Kathleen is an elderly lady with Parkinson's Disease and this is a huge comfort to her. She is very grateful for all your help.

What can you say? Everything was perfect.

Absolutely fantastic service. Adam was very happy.

I was very impressed with the lady who came treated me like I was a human person, they were so polite and very helpful

Thank you for your help

My mother has pressed the pendant many times over the past few months and the bed sensor has also put calls through to Vitaline. No matter how many times my mum has fallen, which is many, the staff do not complain and I do feel that they need to be praised for their services



I live with my mother and work fulltime hours. I had major concerns about her using the gas cooker but with the Telecare equipment I know that if she does forget to turn it off, the sensors will call Vitaline direct.

I had to ring twice in a fortnight and they couldn't be any more helpful.

Thank you to all the good and kind staff.

First Class

My mother is on her own, partially sighted, not mobile. Vitaline enables her to stay in her own home. We are grateful.

For more information about Vitaline, please contact 01253 477678 or via the website www.vitaline.org.uk

Appendix 1



Installation Survey Questions

- I was contacted promptly after my application for the Vitaline Service
- The installation was completed with the minimum delay and within the agreed timescales
- The Installer was displaying his/her ID badge
- The Installer was friendly, competent and efficient
- The equipment was explained to me
- I received advice on how to use the equipment
- All my questions were answered to my satisfaction
- The Installer tidied up after him/herself and I was happy with the way my property was left
- I was treated with courtesy and respect
- I would recommend Blackpool Vitaline
- I feel that the service is value for money

For each survey customers are invited to respond by indicating:

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Not Sure
- 4) Disagree
- 5) Strongly Disagree

Feedback

In addition to the opportunity to give feedback on individual aspects of the service, users are invited to comment specifically on the quality of the service overall by indicating their opinion as *Excellent, Very Good, Average, Poor, Very Poor* - to date all comments in this area have been positive. Vitaline values all feedback, seeing it as a tool to enable the service to continually improve.

Of the 272 returned surveys, 140 people provided additional feedback.

Below are the themes arising within the feedback provided, for Vitaline Installations along with the number of occurrences of each theme and approximate percentages.



Feedback	Total
Thanks	25.66%
Praise for Staff	20.66%
Praise for the Service	36.33%
Peace of Mind/ Reassurance	14.33%
Concerns	3%

Control Centre Staff/ Mobile Response Survey Questions

- My call was answered promptly and efficiently
- The call centre operator was friendly and I was confident I would get help
- I received the help I needed
- The mobile responder was competent and efficient and wore their ID badge
- I was treated with courtesy and respect
- I am confident that Vitaline will not let me down in an emergency
- Vitaline has given me security and peace of mind
- Vitaline is supporting me to continue to live independently
- I feel that the service is good value for money
- I would recommend Blackpool Vitaline

For each survey customers are invited to respond by indicating;

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Not Sure
- 4) Disagree
- 5) Strongly Disagree

Feedback

In addition to the opportunity to give feedback on individual aspects of the service, users are invited to comment specifically on the quality of the service overall by indicating their opinion as *Excellent, Very Good, Average, Poor, Very Poor* - to date all comments in this area have been positive. Vitaline values all feedback, seeing it as a tool to enable the service to continually improve.



Of the 249 returned surveys, 115 people provided additional feedback.

Below are the themes arising within the feedback provided, for Vitaline Mobile Response along with the number of occurrences of each theme and approximate percentage

Feedback	Total
Thanks	26.5%
Praise for Staff	36.5%
Praise for the Service	24%
Peace of Mind/ Reassurance	26%
Concerns	0%

Generic Survey Questions

- My Service Agreement with the service states clearly Vitaline's responsibility towards me
- I know what standards of service to expect
- The equipment has been explained to me
- I have been given advice on how to use the equipment
- All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction
- Vitaline staff are friendly and approachable
- I would not hesitate to call Vitaline if I needed help
- I am confident that I could rely on Vitaline in an emergency
- I am aware of how to register a complaint about the service should I need to
- I feel that the service is value for money
- I would recommend Blackpool Vitaline
- Having the service has enhanced my quality of life.
- Please indicate how decision to have the service was reached.



For each survey customers are invited to respond by indicating;

- 1) Strongly Agree
- 2) Agree
- 3) Not Sure
- 4) Disagree
- 5) Strongly Disagree

Feedback

In addition to the opportunity to give feedback on individual aspects of the service, users are invited to comment specifically on the quality of the service overall by indicating their opinion as *Excellent, Very Good, Average, Poor, Very Poor* - to date all comments in this area have been positive. Vitaline values all feedback, seeing it as a tool to enable the service to continually improve.

Of the 190 returned surveys 4 people were unsure how to register a complaint and 1 person was not sure that the service was value for money. Every other question received a positive response. 148 people provided feedback; all of which concentrated on their reasons for having the service

Feedback	Total
Recommended by health professional	115
Recommended by friend/family member	72
Recommended by social worker	67
Recommended by carer	10
Personal decision based on need for sense of security and peace of mind	136



Response to Concerns Reported

Installation

1) Time scale was incorrect but apologies were made and Installer still called on the correct date so was happy with installation

2) The only complaint was that it was 7 o'clock at night and it was not their fault but I would advise they come in daylight to others. Thank you.

3) There is too much technology

4) A lot to remember

Two concerns raised refer to time scales. All staff within the Vitaline service carry out all duties. It is the Mobile Warden's task to install the service as well as to respond to emergency calls so bookings for installations are made in time slots of 3 hours i.e. between 09.00 and 12.00, between 12.00 and 15.00 etc the last one being 7pm. These broad time scales are to allow for the possibility of emergency calls which will always take precedence over routine work

As a service we are always looking for new and innovative ways to improve but at this time the three hour slot is thought to be the most effective way to deliver the installation service.

One concern was that there is nowadays too much technology.

One concern was that there is a lot to remember.

Although only sample positive feedback comments have been entered into this report all concerns raised are shown.

Summary and Conclusion

From all feedback during this period, of the 403 comments received 4 were concerns raised and 399 were positive.

Of the 4 concerns 1 is beyond Vitaline's control and the 2 referring to time scales have been addressed as far as possible. It is appreciated that there is quite a lot of information given at installation but all of it is supported by an information pack that in addition to providing all the information in a written format includes a FAQ and



emphasises that service users can contact the centre at any time with questions and/or concerns.

After studying all the negative feedback it is concluded that with negative comments at 1% of all comments received, Vitaline continues to provide an excellent service that is highly valued by customers.

