

Appendix 1 - Case Studies, Wirral Independence Commission

Pamela is 90-year-old woman who is very frail. Her family are struggling to care for her, and she is at risk of having to be admitted to hospital. This would have a very negative effect on Pamela and her family. Following a call from her GP, an Occupational Therapist from the Urgent Community Response Team assessed Pamela and was able to access community equipment from the Wirral Independence Service. This consisted of a hospital bed, with a profiling mattress to minimise the risk of pressure sores; a wheeled commode; a walking frame and Ambi-Turners – devices to help the family and care workers to turn Pamela in bed without causing any harm to her joints or skin. The equipment was delivered within 4 hours of the assessment being made and enabled Pamela to remain living downstairs, without the need to go upstairs to the toilet or to bed. Most of all, it prevented Pamela from being admitted to hospital and enabled her family, with the aid of a small domiciliary care package, to keep her at home. Pamela continues to do well and enjoys the company of her family each day, free from the worry of having to go to hospital.

John is a 27-year-old man with autism and learning disabilities. He lives in supported living accommodation and is supported through a combination of core and spot hours. The dedicated support is designed to help him plan and choose the daily activities he wants to participate in and offer him an outlet for his creative abilities, including writing. John can on occasions behave in ways which others may find a challenge, due to frustrations to do the things he wants, when he wants, including contact with his family. Following a case review with the use of technology enabled care at the forefront of the social worker's mind, John was prescribed some personalised technology. The equipment was designed entirely around John's needs and desires, enabling him to safely browse the Internet, contact friends and family through video-calling, organise and arrange his day with care workers, and most importantly gave him the outlet for his creative writing. It was also discovered that he used the writing function to inform his carers about what he believed to be gaps in his care. This enabled care workers to alter their routines and John's mood improved, making his and the care worker's lives less stressful. Following a formal review six weeks after the provision of the technology, the social worker recommended a 5.5 hours per week reduction in the hours provided as they were no longer required due to the impact of the technology enabled care – John was able to manage more of his daily routine without the need for hands-on support.

Betty was an 88-year-old woman, recently discharged from hospital after being diagnosed with a terminal condition. Her greatest wish was to be able to go back to her family home of 75 years. Her niece was also keen for Betty to return home, however, was worried about how she might cope as she could not stay the whole time to make sure her aunt was safe. An occupational therapist prescribed digital Telecare for Betty. This consisted of the alarm buttons working alongside sensors that tracked daily living activities and reported them to the alarm receiving centre so that help could be provided when and where necessary. The new technology also enabled Betty's niece to access information about how Betty was – that she was up and about in the morning, going into the kitchen, looking after herself in the bathroom and going to bed at the usual time. This gave Betty's niece great peace of mind, knowing that while she couldn't be there all day, she could "keep an eye" on how her aunt was.

Unfortunately, Betty died a few weeks after being discharged, however the use of the new Telecare system had enabled her to return home and enable family members to take a much more active role in her care.