

Setting Service Standards In Telecare

A Quality Framework for Service Providers

Reassurance for Commissioners, Service Users and Carers

There are over 1.7 million people benefiting from telecare in the UK. Yet it is still a young industry and needs standards that ensure the service is reliable, consistent and continuous for people using telecare and for those – mainly local authorities – commissioning it. This is why, at the Telecare Services Association (TSA), we have produced a Telecare Code of Practice.

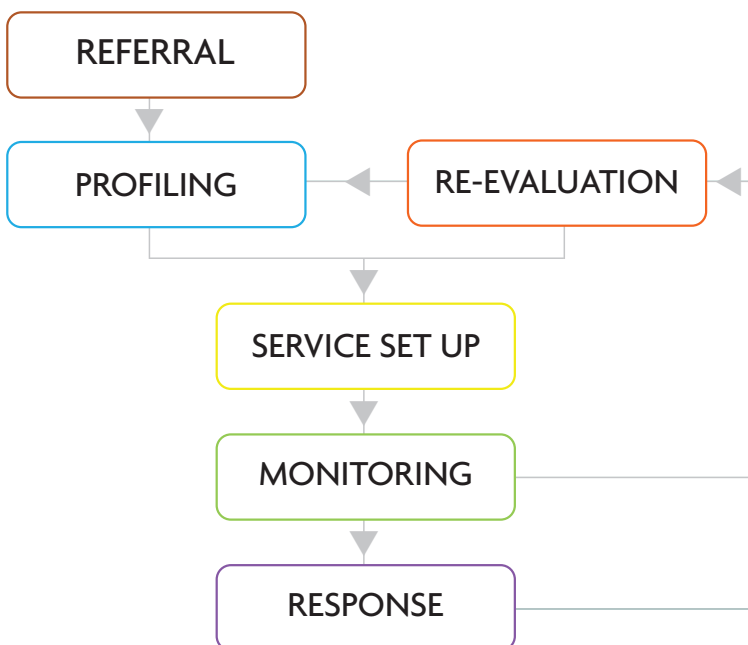
The 2009 Code is the result of the widest stakeholder consultation exercise ever undertaken by TSA. Government departments in England and in the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Department of Health together with TSA Members have all been involved in shaping its modular framework.

Who is the Code aimed at?

TSA developed the Telecare Code of Practice primarily for use by telecare service providers to ensure quality standards for service delivery and, critically, to assist commissioners in identifying quality providers.

The latest release of this Code is a reflection of the TSA R2R model – a referral to response schematic. This model sets out the process whereby a person is identified as needing telecare support right through to what happens when the service is called into action.

Referral to Response Model



Essentially, the R2R model establishes a framework by which risks are identified and managed and by which telecare has the maximum opportunity to deliver the benefits it promises. The Code is set out in the Matrix (see overleaf) and this reflects the different stages of the R2R model.

The components of the model

Referral is the initial contact made by potential service users (the people needing the telecare) or their representatives with the telecare service provider. The referral is dealt with by suitably qualified and trained staff who provide accurate information about the telecare service.

Profiling examines the needs of the individual, their physical and emotional state and the status of the physical environment. From this information, the appropriate type of response and the range of telecare equipment to best manage the risk and support the individual, are identified.

Service set up examines the tailoring, installation (and calibration) of the agreed telecare package. It is critical that the service user understands how the telecare package will provide support so building confidence in the whole telecare solution; the equipment, and the remote monitoring and response elements.


Monitoring is the moment of truth for telecare. Trained staff accustomed to dealing with vulnerable people (often in life threatening situations) are central to any telecare provision. The 24/7 monitoring centres need robust protocols to deliver a watertight solution that is appropriate to the individual's needs. Effective and reliable back-up must be in place to ensure the delivery of a constant and consistent service.

Response is the provision of routine and emergency responder services to the service user in their homes.

Re-evaluation is the systematic reassessment of events that cause the alerts and responses. Re-evaluation determines the ongoing type and level of care and support, appropriate to changing needs with the full involvement and consent of the individual.

The Code Matrix

The Code of Practice is structured in modular form as set out in the matrix below. Each module in the matrix relates to the different components of the R2R Model. This makes it flexible enough to allow the Code to reflect local operating practices, legislation and policy. Critically, the matrix is designed to ensure that at the moment of truth – when a sensor sounds – agreed protocols deliver the right response.

	PROCESS MODULES									
	ACCREDITED SERVICES									
	In development		Released mid 2009			Released January 2009			In development	
SUPPORT & ADVICE	REFERRAL	PROFILING		SERVICE SET UP		MONITORING	RESPONSE	RE-EVALUATION		
STANDARDS MODULES	Referral/ Enquiry	Service User Profiling	Telecare Plan	Service Tailoring	Installation			Escalation/ Pathways	Re-evaluation	
Safeguarding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Governance	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Staff & Training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Privacy & Data Protection	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Partnership Working	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Service User Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Managing access to/ working in SU's home			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Technology Management						✓	✓	✓		
Business Continuity						✓	✓	✓		
Planning and Development of TSC							✓			
Legislation (Inc Health & Safety)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Performance Management & KPIs		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
(Nation State Variants)										

SU = Service User TSC = Telecare Service Centre KPI = Key Performance Indicator

Version 1.0 © Telecare Services Association November 2008

Performance Management and KPIs

Key Performance Indicators

TSA has identified a set of KPIs that telecare service providers need to meet as part of their accreditation to the areas of the Code they cover. Attainment of these challenging KPIs in terms of call handling response times, timescales for installation of telecare solutions and delivery of mobile response services, will ensure service providers attain the quality levels that users require.

Accreditation and audit

A robust telecare package is one where the components are interdependent. Whether there is one provider who delivers end-to-end service or where components are delivered individually, it is critical that each module is provided to a high and consistent standard. Accreditation provides the comfort that this is the case.

To ensure quality is maintained, TSA has a Code of Practice Audit Scheme and has contracted with a UKAS accredited independent body to undertake on-site inspections. Very importantly, accreditation is not based on self-assessment and TSA member organisations will receive a rigorous initial inspection, followed by annual inspections, with a full inspection every third year to verify they still meet the Code's standards.

National Government recognition

To manage and develop the Code further, a Management Board has been established. Representatives from the Department of Health in England, and the Scottish and Welsh Governments, helped inform the Code development.

The previous version of the Code of Practice achieved recognition in England from the Department of Communities and Local

Government and given Passport status within the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework. It was also recognised within the NHS PASA (Purchasing and Supply Agency) National Framework Agreement for Telecare.

The Scotland Telecare Development Programme Board has agreed to work with the TSA to inform health and social care partnerships about the detail of the 2009 Code of Practice.

Reassuring Users and Commissioners

Telecare is increasingly positioned as a life-critical service on which service users must be able to rely. Accreditation offers confidence and reassurance that telecare will deliver when it is needed and is a valuable tool for service Commissioners.

If you would like to know any more about the Code, please contact the TSA Membership Services Centre on **01625 520320** or email: admin@telecare.org.uk