



PRESS RELEASE

TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Corporate Communications
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
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Creating the safest community

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For Immediate Release

Keeping vulnerable people in Sunderland safe

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service have joined forces with Sunderland Care and Support's Telecare service and Age UK to help make vulnerable people safer in Sunderland.

Telecare provides a communication service and equipment loan to vulnerable residents to help ensure their safety and well-being and ensure a swift response is achieved should an emergency arise. The package comprises of:-

- A personal pendant device to enable customers to raise an alarm at the press of a button. This is linked to the Customer Service Centre in Sunderland.
- A 24 hour monitored smoke alarm that is linked to the Customer Service Centre for immediate support.
- A bogus caller alarm that is installed at the front door which can be easily activated should the person feel uncomfortable or threatened by a cold caller.
- A 24 hour monitored Carbon Monoxide Detector that is also linked the Customer Service Centre.

Through the Sunderland Homesafe initiative, anyone who is referred to this scheme will receive the first six weeks of the package free of charge. Once this trial period is over the normal monthly charges will apply. This includes the maintenance of the equipment and the 24 hour monitoring of the system by Sunderland Care and Support. The cost is £12.75 (+VAT) per month.

The free trial of Homesafe is available to all people in the Sunderland area who meet the following criteria and are not currently using the Telecare provision:

- The person lives alone and is elderly and is living with dementia

AND has one or more of the following risk factors:

- Is a smoker
- Is a substance misuser.

- There are signs that the person has had burns or scorch marks either/or on their person or within their living environment
- Would struggle to leave the property in the event of a fire.
- Feels lonely, isolated and scared.

Referrals to the Homesafe scheme can be made from adult social care workers, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the NHS and the voluntary sector. All referrals received will be screened to assess whether they are eligible for the free trail.

To receive the free trail for a 6 week period or for further queries people should call 0191 561 4435 or email telecare@sunderlandcareandsupport.gov.uk

District Manager for Sunderland, Ian Cuskin, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Vulnerable people are more at risk from fire with most of our fire fatalities over recent years involving the elderly. This initiative provides extra protection for the more vulnerable members of our community, and gives assurance to those people and their families that for as little as 51p a day someone is constantly monitoring their environment should an emergency occur and ensure a speedy response from the partnership."

Senior Operations Manager for Sunderland Care and Support, which runs Telecare in Sunderland, Gill Lawson, said: "The Telecare service provides peace of mind for customers and their families 24 hours a day, knowing that immediate help and support is available the moment an alarm is raised. By working in partnership with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service and Age UK Sunderland we are able to ensure that those most at risk of fire can live safely and independently in their own homes

Director Age UK Sunderland, Alan Patchett, said: "We fully support this initiative as it is a very cost effective way for older people to remain safe and have excellent protection in the event of a fire in their home. I would urge all older people to take up this brilliant offer"

For more information on how to stay safe from fire visit www.twfire.gov.uk or www.facebook.com/twfrs or www.twitter.com/tyne_wear_frs

Ends

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