Combining digital technologies and human contact to improve outcomes for housing and health

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A bit about Alertacall

- Founded in 2004 by James Batchelor our CEO who was looking for clever ways to improve contact with his own grandmother.

- Today our services support around 15,000 people in conjunction with housing, health and social care providers, as well as private individuals.

- We use ingenious technology to improve daily contact with people, and using that contact to drive powerful outcomes for housing and health.

- Award winning – nationwide coverage, with office locations in Windermere and Warrington.
Meet Eveline, Age 86

• Staunchly independent, and wanted to live in her own home for as long as possible.

• Was still driving her own car to do her shopping, until one eventful day.

• When offered a pendant alarm and other telecare devices she gave an “unexpected” response.
What Eveline said about a pendant...

“Get stuffed - I’m not possibly old enough for one of those things – I’m only 86!”
Challenges with pendant alarms

“I’m not ready for one of those”

“I wonder if this even works, and who will come if it does?”

“This brands me as a vulnerable person”

Unconscious and unable to activate

“I’ll be OK until my daughter visits.”

The vast majority of those with pendant alarms do not wear them most of the time.
Calling Eveline each day provided these health & wellbeing insights

- She often didn’t wear her hearing aids.
- She was unwell more frequently than we realised.
- We could tell her about activities and events (e.g. social events).
- We could remind her about medication.
- We could remind her about appointments.
- We recognised the signs that she was potentially unwell.
- Daily contact could be a “life saver” because one day when she was unresponsive to our calls - we went round to find her on the floor.
With daily contact we also improved **housing related matters**

- She used that time to tell us about repairs that were needed
- She told us about help she needed e.g. to fill in forms
- We developed a strong sense about her occupancy patterns
- We had a better appreciation of housing related issues
- Could nudge her in to turning heating up in winter months

**BUT** - Eveline told us she didn’t like waiting round for a call!
We invented the “I am okay” button and spent years creating technology to improve daily contact.

Customers can choose to engage with our OKEachDay Button once or twice a day, in their own time, 365 days a year.

When they do this we can relay news or information, e.g. an appointment, on a screen or via a phone.

Otherwise, they receive a call from a specially trained team member giving real human contact.
Our OKEachDay Button which gives people control over levels of daily contact is available on several devices.
This process gives customers absolute control over levels of human contact 365 days a year. It also protects them, and keeps them informed.

Our OKEachDay Button is available on devices that suit lots of people.

Dementia friendly communication, suicide awareness and reflective listening training for our teams.

We regularly save lives by using our data to escalate to contacts.

Powerful technology that drives quality contact and provides preventative analytics.
Changes in the way people communicate can indicate an imminent support requirement

Male, 76 years of age (Months 1-4)
Changes in the way people communicate can indicate an imminent support requirement

Male, 76 years of age (Months 5-8)
So what kinds of events create detectable shifts in patterns of contact?

- Cognitive decline
- Urinary tract infections
- Influenza, coughs, colds
- Respiratory conditions
- Other infections
- Mental health crisis
- Bereavement
- Poor medication compliance
- Changes in the environment
Changes in the home environment can have a major effect on health

- WHO recommends indoor temperature in homes do not fall below 18°C
- Below 16°C the risk from respiratory diseases rises sharply
- Homes with high humidity enable bacteria and viruses to thrive
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018 - places legal responsibility on landlords to ensure address heating and humidity issues
- We have introduced an environmental sensor to enhance property management and provide greater health insights
Example Data: Urinary Tract Infection

Female, 80 years of age (Months 1-4)
What’s clever about this approach, is that human contact has a tendency to increase at those times it is needed the most – when they have new needs.
Benefits to housing providers

- Fire safety/risks reduction – 365 day occupancy tracking means we know who is away
- Staff time focused where needs are greatest
- Improved repairs handling – notification is quicker and the repair costs lower
- Better resident engagement – easier to communicate property related information
Benefits to health providers

- Aston University reported that daily contact post hospital discharge can reduce readmission rates by up to 40%
- Alertacall users are significantly less likely to be readmitted post discharge
- Alertacall users average length of hospital stay is shorter due to detecting deteriorating health sooner
- The ability to talk each day to the team reduces social isolation and improves wellbeing
Other health benefits of daily contact

Can prompt people to take medication, attend appointments or wait in for visitors

Detecting changing needs helps plan care and support packages and potential home modifications

Customers feel less lonely and safer

It’s a platform for social prescribing
Now what if...

we were to allow our services to be integrated with telehealth services such as those provided by Docobo.
Daily contact can be inexpensive and create many benefits for you and your service users – especially if you use the right technologies to power your service.
How YOU can bring contact to life

✓ Consider rolling out daily contact as a first layer of service for older people, before “alarm services”. Create your own service or deploy an out-of-the-box model like ours.

✓ See daily contact as a facilitator for social prescribing, as a life-saver, as a tool to improve medication and appointment compliance - and as means to reduce loneliness.

✓ Develop ways to better use the data that you’re already collecting about service users, e.g. you might already be able to see that someone’s needs are changing if you deployed the right analysis.
thanks for listening

If questions come to you later... please do get in touch.

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