



Department
of Health &
Social Care

*From: Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State for Care*

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I am writing to all providers of community alarm services to reinforce the importance of having quality standards in place to ensure a safe service for users.

Telecare plays an important part in enabling and supporting older and vulnerable people to live safely and independently in their own home. The support of telecare providers helps to give individuals, as well as their families and carers, security and peace of mind.

In 2015, a telecare service user tragically died, despite contacting a community alarm service. A number of mistakes were made around the monitoring procedures and handling of the call. As a result of this, my predecessor, David Mowat, took part in a debate in the House of Commons last year.

In light of this case, and to prevent any similar incidents in the future, I ask you to take the necessary action to ensure your organisation has put in place the quality and safety standards that would prevent such a tragedy from happening again.

Examples of this are:

- a mechanism to ensure that potentially relevant medical information held will be shared with ambulance services, unless a user specifically requests otherwise.
- clear procedures for communicating with responders, and, in particular, where it becomes clear that a responder is not available, that this will be escalated.

As you will be aware, there are several bodies across the technology enabled care industry that provide accreditation and guidance in addition to offering training and support. If you are not already doing so, you may wish to consider taking advantage of this moving forward.

Please direct any queries you may have to the Adult Social Care Data and Technology Team: socialcaretech@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State for Care