

Caring for the elderly

Improving care in the home and easing the burden on families

As the population grows older the level of support the state will be able to provide per individual will diminish and the gap is going to have to be picked up by families. Historically there is a perceived view that many in the UK view care for the elderly as being a function that the state / government / local authorities should take a lead on, rather than families. Many in government and society now see this as something that will need to change with a move toward a more family centric model of care with the state providing a safety net.

It's best for the elderly and frankly far more economically friendly for their families if the elderly can remain in their own homes. Technology, married with a sensible routine of visiting help, can provide significant assistance to both the family and the elderly and greatly assist in the maintenance of independence and retention of peace of mind for both those receiving care and their families.

How is this scenario likely to pan out in practice? Clearly there are a number of variables. First and foremost, individual circumstances vary with differing needs for the elderly and varying geographic distances between the elderly and their family. Differing family relationships are also a key factor. Home visits by carers, be they from a carer agency or family member, must be part of the equation and such visits also provide human contact.

There has been much talk of technology enabling and assisting with care at home. For many years, somewhat basic Telecare systems have provided the ability for an elderly person to call for help. Their problem is that they rely on the person having their pendant / wrist button with them and their willingness to use it. It is a reactive rather than proactive system.

In the last couple of years proactive systems have become available. These, such as 50plus Assurance Care, monitor an elderly person's movement and environmental condition and notify a relative or carer if something seems amiss. They are 'intelligent' in that they build up a historical picture of what is expected by the hour and notify one or more carers if there is a problem. Relatives or carers can see the information on their mobile(s) and be assured all is well.

Increasingly other technology is coming to the aid of families and carers. As many elderly, not surprisingly struggle with modern technology it is evolving to the extent that the seemingly complex operation of mobile phones for example can be overcome by using smart speakers so that an elderly person can use voice commands instead of having to work a screen interface and / or passwords. Families can also de-risk the simple function of answering the door by installing a video doorbell which rings on a mobile phone (as well as in the house if required) to both protect the ability elderly person from unwanted callers and scams and ensure the doorbell is actually answered.

50plus is working on a broad range of services encompassing care, technology and practical services such that an 'umbrella' of modern care can be provided. Keep an eye on our web site for more or contact us if you would like to learn more.