

# Factsheet 4: Technology and gadgets for independent living

## Assistive technology

The term 'assistive technology' covers a very wide range of equipment that can support and assist people with care and support needs. These include very simple, low-tech items such as calendar clocks or falls alarms, to more high-tech gadgets, such as sensors that can detect accidents or emergencies. Some of these gadgets can even be monitored by a community alarm and alert service - this is known as 'Telecare'. Assistive technology enables people to perform tasks that they would otherwise be unable to do. It can also increase the ease and safety with which tasks can be performed.

## Independent living

Assistive technology can be a benefit to anybody who needs help to continue to live independently in their own homes, and can provide help with the following aspects of independent living:

### Safety in the home

These devices can help improve safety in the home. They include gas, smoke, extreme temperature and flood detectors, as well as simple lighting solutions.

### Health and personal safety

Assistive technology devices can also monitor a person for a specific health condition such as epilepsy, can raise an alarm should a person fall, and outside of the home can be used to find a person should they go missing. They can also be used to request help should a person become disorientated when away from their home.

### Communication

These devices can help to support communication. They include easy to use telephones and mobile phones, and simple solutions for people to call for help from another person within their home.

### Prompts and reminders

These devices can help act as prompts and reminders by providing visual and audible cues. They include clock calendars, medication reminders and memo minders.

### Support for carers

Assistive technology alarms and alerts can provide great reassurance to carers who are concerned for a loved one. Those carers who are struggling to cope and continue in their caring role may find that assistive technology can provide much needed assistance.

### Find out more and try it out

You can get further information on assistive technology by using the Ask Sara website where you'll also have the option of having some items on loan to try out.

You can also call our First Point of Contact team (FPoC) on **0345 678 9044** or speak to your social care practitioner for further advice.

There are a number of websites and stores that supply technology and gadgets to support independent living. These include the following:

Ask Sara – [www.asksara.dlf.org.uk](http://www.asksara.dlf.org.uk)

Independent Living Partnership – [www.ilp-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ilp-ltd.co.uk)