



Herts Careline's telecare equipment helps Hertfordshire Mum

Blowing the myth that telecare is 'only for older people' out of the water, Herts Careline has been supporting a local mother to regain her independence and transform her life.

Setting the scene

X is a professional lady, a mother to two young boys of 12 and 10 years old with complex needs and has a partner who works full time. Her life was turned upside down around 10 years ago when she began to suffer from epilepsy, associated seizures and crippling anxiety attacks due to her condition. As well as the detrimental effects to her own health, her condition also affected her whole family.

X's social worker recommended Herts Careline's innovative Stove Guard Pilot Scheme. X already had a community alarm pendant system installed in her home (with a different provider) so was aware of the benefits of assistive technology. However the Stove Guard and the additional telecare devices Herts Careline demonstrated and provided to X, took her risk management to another level and now she and her family are safer and more independent.

The Stove Guard is a discreet device that automatically switches the cooker off if it is left unattended or gets too hot, preventing the risk of fire. It also sends an alert to Herts Careline's Control Room if it intervenes so they are aware of the situation and can ensure she is safe. Whilst enrolling X into the Stove Guard pilot, Herts Careline's complex needs team, Independent Living Supplies, also assessed her overall situation and installed a number of other vital technology aids to keep X and her family safer. X said "It all sounded too good to be true!" But the proof was in results.



How we've helped

X's assistive technology equipment includes a community alarm and pendant, a fall detector, a smoke alarm, a heat sensor, a Stove Guard, a flood detector and an Epilepsy smart watch linked to a mobile phone which can alert her partner and our Control Room if she has a seizure.

As a consequence of the epileptic seizures that X lives with, she also has anxiety issues. This makes going out in public difficult and she is unable to drive due to the medication she takes. She was spending a considerably amount on taxi fares and takeaways to reduce her stress and avoid cooking. But now her life has significantly changed for the better. X is now no longer afraid to cook as she knows the Stove Guard will keep her safe. This means she can provide nutritious meals for her family, and her sons can enjoy cooking with her where previously they would have to wait for her partner to return home from work.



Having assistive technology in her home and wearing the Epilepsy smart watch which works at home and outside, X declares it has "reduced her expenditure and stress levels and has improved her overall wellbeing." It has also drastically reduced the level of seizures she was

having from twelve a week to now 3 or 4, making life more enjoyable for all her family.” X now feels confident enough to take public transport into town as she knows that her Epilepsy smart watch will alert her partner if she has a seizure when out in public, something she would have previously avoided undertaking. This means she can do the weekly shop rather than insist her partner does this after work, and supervises her son’s school run’s which previously would also have been her partner’s added responsibility. Consequently, they now have more time together as a family rather than undertaking weekly chores in their leisure time.

X now also feels more confident attending health appointments for her sons as she can feel the warning signs if a seizure is imminent, and can often stop one altogether as she knows she must rest straight away. The smart watch also proved vital in telling X that she’d experienced seizures whilst she was asleep. She had been feeling groggy upon waking with no explanation. But data captured from her smart watch showed she had been experiencing seizures whilst she was asleep. This allowed her to take this proof to her GP who adjusted her medication and now her sleep quality has improved as the amount of sleep seizures has decreased. This has also meant her partner sleeps more soundly as he doesn’t have to sleep with ‘one eye open’ to keep watch over her. This improves quality of life for them both.

As X’s children lives with complex needs, it means they pick up any inkling that X may be feeling unwell. This increases stress levels from both them and X, heightening her risk of seizures. But now, as both boys are of an age where they can understand that the Smart Watch will alert her partner if she has a seizure, that the Stove Guard will switch the cooker off if needed and that they can press the ‘big red button’ on the community alarm unit if they need help, their anxiety levels have also reduced considerably.

Sharing her story

x was enthusiastic to share her story with us as she “didn’t even know” that this technology was available and she feels that so many more like her could benefit as she has. She also praised the Control Room Operators for their patience and kindness when speaking through the alarm unit to her sons. They are happy for them to ‘practice’ speaking to the Control Room so they know what to do in a real emergency situation, and the boys trust that they can help. X’s partner is also much happier in life. He enjoys a better quality of sleep, knows when X experiences a seizure without having to be constantly with her and enjoys the safely cooked home cooked meals! “I really can’t thank you enough” said X. “I now have the right to be independent whilst living with my condition; its life changing. I used to hide my condition due to worry about people thinking I couldn’t look after my children. Now I shout about it loud and proud because I know I have your technology keeping me safe.”

