



# Annual Report 2020

## Vitaline Service

## Foreword

Vitaline operates providing a wide range of support services to Vulnerable Adults over the age of 18 years old. We are part of a multi- disciplinary team with other professional from across both Health & Social care sectors in order to deliver high quality care.

Vitaline is accountable to elected members and the service has won accreditation with Telecare Services Association Our staff team members are all employed by Blackpool Council and are subject to Blackpool’s Councils Code of Conduct.

The team operates a responsive, comprehensive 24 hours service, 7 day a week, 365 days a year. We provide a wide range of services that are tailored for each individual who wishes are to remain living independently and safely in their own homes through various Telecare and Telehealth technologies, including Pendants, House Sensors and other equipment as well as providing a response service for individuals which or aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of our users.

Vitaline has continued to deliver another successful year service to all its customers during 2020 maintaining “Business as Usual” throughout the pandemic

We also provide a Lifting Service for clients who have fallen but are uninjured and a Falls Referral service that is designed to prevent further falls by referring people to other community based support services. In addition we are the Council’s twenty-four seven emergency response centre.

2020 saw us retain our accreditation with the Telecare Services Association (TSA), the national trade body. TEC (Telecare Enabled Care) inspections are stringent and cover every aspect of the service. To achieve and retain accreditation we have to satisfy the inspectors that we meet all required standards.

We regularly invite customers to comment on our services by sending out service **Evaluation-** questionnaires.

Amid a backdrop of national economic uncertainty, Vitaline has continued to perform, grow and to deliver an excellent service. We intend to continue to do so throughout 2021 and beyond.

Gwen Robinson  
Assistive Technology Lead

## Key Statistics 2019

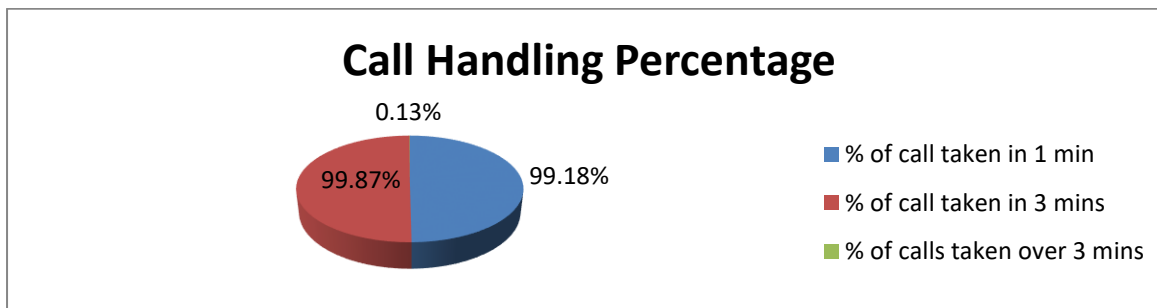


During 2020, in addition to 316,671 routine monitoring calls Vitaline handled 36933 that required an emergency response and or a further action

Our aim is to at least achieve and ideally exceed the call handling response standards set by the Telecare Services Association which are;

- To answer 97.5% of calls within 1 minute
- To answer 99% of calls within 3 minutes
- To produce an exception report for any calls taking over 3 minutes to answer.
- To provide a mobile response in an emergency within 45 minutes.

Our results for 2020 exceed all targets as identified in the chart below



Vitaline average mobile response time during 2020 was 19.03 minutes, well within the TSA (Telecare Services Association) target of 90% within 45 minutes.



## Equipment Installation

Our aim is to at least meet and where possible exceed the Telecare Services Targets for equipment installation which are;

- 9 out of 10 urgent installations completed within 2 working days. 10 out of 10 within 5 days.
- 9 out of 10 non urgent installations completed within 15 working days. 10 out of 10 within 20 days.



## Urgent Installations

After discounting exceptions where delays were caused by issues outside of Vitaline's control (e.g. No telephone line, delayed release from residential care or hospital) 100% of urgent installations took place within 2 days of referral with some being done the same day and many the next day.

## Non Urgent Installations

After discounting exceptions where delays were caused by issues outside of Vitaline's control (e.g. No telephone line, delayed release from residential care or hospital) 98.06% of non-urgent installations took place within 16 days of referral 100% within the 21 day TSA requirement.

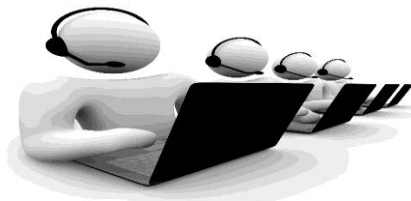
## Critical/Non Critical Repairs

Vitaline adopts a faulty equipment exchange policy so irrespective of the fault being critical or non-critical faulty equipment is replaced within hours of it being reported.



## SERVICES

With the aim of supporting independent living, Vitaline provides a wide range of individually designed assistive-technology packages coupled with a personal mobile response to emergency calls. Equipment ranges from basic pendant alarms through to the very latest wireless controlled environmental sensors that can detect a potential problem without the need of client input e.g. movement sensors that will 'know' if there has been no movement in a property – a possible indication of a fall.



All our charges are fully inclusive with no hidden extras and regardless of how many times the service is used.

Among the benefits, Vitaline's Telecare can provide:

- Early detection of emergencies and a fast response to them
- Early detection of lifestyle changes that may indicate deterioration in health
- The opportunity to address problems at an early stage before they become acute
- A sense of security and peace of mind for the individual and their families
- Receive a personal response from our mobile wardens to any issues or concerns



## Complaints and Commendations

The Service takes all complaints very seriously and makes every effort to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, and definitely within the timescales laid down in the Corporate Policy.

It is well known that service users do not always like to complain about any issues of service provision. However, the Vitaline Service is grateful for all feedback regarding its service provision as this greatly assists the development of higher service standards.

The service received 8 complaints which were all responded to within TSA 5 day response target.



## Success Story Case Study

### The Situation

Mrs M is an 88 year old lady prone to falling with poor balance and mobility issues. During 2020 Mrs M lost her balance and fell to the floor; as she was unable to get herself up her pendant was pressed for assistance where Vitaline dispatched the lifting team arriving within 15 minutes at the property. Mrs M confirmed she was uninjured before Vitaline responders successfully lifted Mrs M using Vitaline's Raizer Lifting equipment. Mrs M informed Vitaline she had been unable to shuffle anywhere to call for help. Her son only visits her on Sundays, and her carer visits for 30 minutes daily at 10am, meaning she could have been left on the floor for hours. Had Mrs M fallen after 10:30am she would not have received help until the carer visited the following day.

### The Outcome

- Mrs M was assessed to having no injuries resulting in a safe lift using specialised equipment.
- Reducing anxiety, deterioration and hospitalisation.
- Mrs M now has confidence to walk around her home knowing help is at hand when needed.

### Customer Quote

"I fell in the corner and couldn't get myself up. I am ever so grateful for you coming out. I don't know what I would have done. My son only visits once a week on a Sunday and he isn't too well himself. I tried for half an hour putting my feet up against the wall and leaning in to the draws but was unable to get up or shuffle anywhere, so I called you out. When the girl came she had me up in 5 minutes it was brilliant. I would have been on the floor for a few hours as my carer arrives at 10am but if I fell after that time without having Vitaline, I would not have been helped until the carer arrived at 10am the following day! I have my wristwatch on at all times. It keeps me at ease knowing I have your reliable service."

## FALLS REFERRAL PATHWAY AND LIFTING SERVICE

In partnership with NHS Blackpool and Lancashire Ambulance Service, Vitaline has established an advice, signposting and referral service for people who have suffered a fall. The aim of this is to reduce the risk of further falls. It also provides a Lifting Service for people who have fallen but who are uninjured.

During 2019 Vitaline successfully completed 1881 lifts thus freeing the ambulance service to attend to more urgent calls.

This service has advanced and is working collaboratively with partners to provide the transfer of patients between North West Ambulance Service Trust and the Integrated Home Response and Falls Lifting Service meaning Vitaline will receive direct communication from the ambulance service.



## SERVICE DEVELOPMENT TARGETS 2021

- To increase private sales.
- To ensure that 100% of all Vitaline staff are trained and competent to carry out all duties inclusive of disaster recovery process
- To work in collaboration with all other allied professionals and stakeholders of the service
- To liaise with IT and equipment supplier to implement the infrastructure required to become a full end to end IP service.



## FUTURE SERVICE DIRECTION

- Vitaline will continue to maintain and build effective working relationships with all its allied professionals and stakeholders.
- To continue to assess options of purchasing an electric vehicle in the next financial year as part of our rolling programme
- To continue with the implementation to move from analogue to digital equipment in readiness for analogue switch off. This will require complex work within Vitaline's infrastructure and software.
- To continue to work with partners to evolve Vitaine's lifting service within a care home environment
- To keep abreast of technology innovations across the telecare sector
- To consider TSA (Telecare Services Association) proactive toolkits which may be beneficial in developing a new service model which will be launched at the industries telecare conference.
- To look at scaling up the Canary system as an assessment tool for social workers
- To trial TunstallGO when launched by our equipment supplier.  
This pendant contains dual microphone along with a GPS facility.



## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Passed TSA accreditation audited by TEC (Telecare Enabled Care) Quality following the new QSF (Quality Standards Framework). This allows Vitaline to demonstrate safety and quality across the service.
- Commenced our Smart Hub replacement programme with a target to replace all analogue equipment with a digital version prior to 2025
- Implemented a compliant cookie policy to Vitaline.org website
- Full social distancing in the ARC (Alarm Receiving Centre) by rerouting call handling stations enabling business as usual throughout the pandemic
- Continued the pilot with NWS (North West Ambulance Service) in receiving category 4 calls through a pager system.
- Implemented proactive welfare calls to all our customer utilising other resources from Provider Services
- During lock down Vitaline delivered emergency food parcels outside of office hours
- Assisted public health in delivering Track and Trace letters to non-contactable positive people

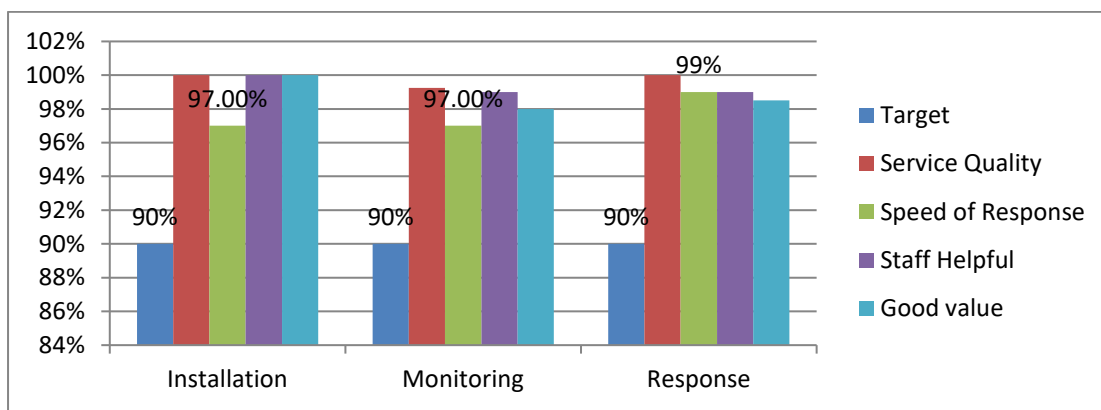


Customers are provided with the opportunity to give feedback on individual aspects of the service.

Vitaline is committed to providing the best possible service to customers and we are always interested in hearing their views. To this end the service surveyed 18.95% of all customers during 2020.

Vitaline is committed to involving customers in shaping the service. To this end we regularly invite customers to share their views on how they would like to see the service develop/improve.

### **Results and level of satisfaction**



### **Sample from Monitoring**

“I live alone and do not have a personal contact who could attend quickly in the event of an emergency. It’s good to know that in an urgent situation someone will come out to help. I was pleased to be contracted from Vitaline during the lockdown. They wanted to know how I was faring particularly with regard to food shopping. I was able to tell them that I was receiving deliveries from Wilshire Farm Food and my local butcher but I loved the community spirit!”



### **Sample from Families and Friends**

“It has made a huge difference to my mum, who is 86, she feels safe now at all times. She says it makes her feel like someone is there in the next room if she falls or feels poorly. Thank you for an excellent, reliable service.”



### **Sample from Installation Survey**

“Following a fall in April I am still having problems with my balance and walking. I live on my own and with Covid restrictions contact with family and friends is limited. I decided to have Vitaline as it offers me further support and makes me feel safer. The service from first contact with Vitaline to the installation of the key safe and phone line was quick and efficient. The gentleman that fitted it was very friendly and professional.”



### Samples from Falls Service

“When Vitaline lift me I feel very safe and in good hands. They are very secure and nothing hurts when I am being lifted from the floor. I couldn't ask for better people to care, they are very kind and considerate. “I feel the service is excellent. When I fell on the bedroom floor the gent arrived very promptly, he gained access and had a good lifting device to get me on my feet. It is very comforting for me to know help is available and especially for my son and daughter-in-law. I am 91 in July and trying to be as independent as I can, to know you are always available is really good and appreciated”

“It's brilliant, I couldn't stay in my home without it. It is a life saver to me and can't praise it enough. I could have been on the floor for days, wonderful service.”

### Sample from Emergency Response Service

“It is a life line for me as I have a lot of illnesses and I am on a lot of medication. I feel safer in my own home knowing I can get the help and care I need. The response I received over the years has been incredible thanks to your dedicated staff. Thank you so much.”



### Negative Feedback

“When I rang it was on both occasions to ask for emergency phone numbers and they could not supply them. Could I suggest that operators are supplied with a list of emergency numbers such as emergency dentists etc.?”

### Summary and Conclusion

From all feedback during this period Vitaline continues to provide an excellent service that is highly valued by our customers.

Vitaline staff have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep “business as usual” resulting in full compliance of TSA (Telecare Services Association) KPI's (Key Performance indicators). In addition the service assisted the Corona Kindness Hub with the delivery of emergency food parcels along with welfare calls to our customers referring when required to Corona Kindness Hub for assistance.

Vitaline continues to benefit North West Ambulance Service (NWAS), not only to free time to attend emergencies but financially. With Vitaline successfully lifting 1881 uninjured fallers this has saved over £272,000 based on a call out price of £145. Moving forward into the up and coming year this service is expected to expand especially in the care home setting and other non-Vitaline customers.

Vitaline will be working hard to replace all analogue equipment supplied out in the community with new digital equipment called Smart Hubs. Telephone exchanges will be switching over to digital using a scheduled rolling programme which may be before the 2025 deadline. **\*Vitaline will continue to monitor telephone exchanges for any digital switch over however it is important that Vitaline are informed if any of our customers move to a digital service as the current analogue equipment may not work.**



Vitaline have evaluated all performance across the service through TSA targets and found a small percentage of 0.03% of response times outside of the expected goal; being on 1 occasion. After investigation the reason was caused through multiple emergency calls at the same time relying on a responder visit. We will continually monitor these targets to assess sufficient staffing levels.

For more information about Vitaline, please contact 01253 477678 email [Vitaline@blackpool.gov.uk](mailto:Vitaline@blackpool.gov.uk).