



# Helping people live more independently with technology enabled care

Annual Report 2019



# Contents



**Foreword**

**About us**

**Key achievements**

**Our customers**

**2020 and beyond**

**Performance**

**Contact us**





# Foreword

Progress Lifeline has experienced another fantastic year during 2019. The business continues to grow, supporting more people throughout England with our Technology Enabled Care services.

Once again we were awarded the Quality Standards Framework (QSF) by the Telecare Services Association (TSA), making this the thirteenth year we have successfully met all the required standards of this industry-recognised award.

We continue to work collaboratively with the TSA and our equipment providers in preparation for the 2025 digitalisation of the UK's telephony network. Our dedicated project team also has been invited to take part in testing with British Telecom (BT).

**“We have achieved some big milestones this year”**

We have achieved some big milestones this year. We have increased our customer base welcoming over 3000 new service users. Won several new telecare contracts, and improved our emergency response time further. We were also double winners at the ITEC Awards.

Our assistive lifting service has grown too. This year we have assisted more than 10,000 people and gained a key contract with Health and Social Care commissioners working in partnership with North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). We started working with NWAS in October as their dedicated resource for non-emergency falls assistance. With the increasing demands on the NHS and ambulance services our response and assistive lifting provision is a vital service that not only strengthens partnerships with public



services, but also improves the lives of many people who are uninjured and just need a little help getting back up after a fall.

We are already implementing our new future focused strategy including; investment in our teams, products, technology and customer care. We will continue to grow and provide the highest quality service to our existing customers and new ones alike.

Our philosophy continues to offer support through telecare, so that people can live independently in their own home.

This annual report is a celebration of all the positive things that we at Progress Lifeline have achieved, to help make our world a better place.

**Loraine Simpson, Director of Services**  
**Progress Lifeline**

# About us

Progress Lifeline is an award-winning personal alarm and telecare services provider. We have over 49,000 customers across the UK.

Our technology enabled care products and services have been making a positive difference to the lives of our customers for over 30 years.

Working closely with our customers, we provide integrated telecare services to help people live more independently at home.



## Our key services include

- 24-hr telecare monitoring and response service to individuals at home
- The supply, installation and maintenance of personal alarms and advanced telecare devices including but not limited to; smoke detectors, fall detectors, flood detectors, doorway & home sensors, KeySafe and medical alerts
- Emergency home response
- Assistive lifting with trained staff and specialist lifting equipment
- Out-of-hours contact centre for housing providers and local authorities
- 24-hr response service for emergency calls from building elevators

We work to the highest standards and targets set by the TEC Services Association (TSA), and have been an accredited member since 2006. We are very proud to be a TEC Quality certified organisation, demonstrating customer safety, innovation and quality of our services.

Progress Lifeline is part of Progress Housing Group, a government regulated and not-for-profit social housing provider with an industry reputation for excellence.

**TSA**<sup>TM</sup>  
Member  
Organisation





# Key Achievements

**This year we increased our customer base welcoming over 3000 new customers. We improved our emergency response time further and gained a key contract with North West Ambulance Service. We were also double winners at the 2019 ITEC Awards .**

## Growth

We welcomed a further 3000 new customers this year to our telecare service. Our improved emergency home response time, means we reached most of our customers on average within 25 minutes. An amazing result as we attended over 19,000 home response visits this year.

Business growth and winning several new telecare contracts has led to an expansion of our teams - meaning we have been able to create more jobs. We have increased our number of alarm response centre operators and our team of emergency home responders. We have also created a new business development team to help enhance and diversify the service.

Progress Lifeline is jointly working with North West Ambulance Service (NWS), the Health & Social Care Commissioners of Lancashire County Council and the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to help with non injured falls and relieve the burden on the ambulance service.

The new service means we will be assisting people who have fallen, but who are uninjured and do not need medical attention, and need some help getting back up. This means reducing the need for an emergency ambulance response.

Jo Bushell, Head of Progress Lifeline, said, "We are proud to be working with the local authority, NWS and NHS partners as part

of an exciting, trailblazing new service. We have an ageing population and there is an increasing demand for help with uninjured falls. It is clinically recognised the importance of lifting people up off the floor as quickly as possible and this does not always have to be an ambulance with a paramedic crew."

She continues, "We have a highly trained team who specialise in responding to people who have fallen at home. It makes sense to let us do this and leave the ambulances and paramedics to focus on high-risk priority call-outs."

Councillor Graham Gooch, Lancashire County Council Cabinet Member for Adult Services, said, "We know that ultimately people want to stay in their own home and remain as independent as possible. This great service will give more families the confidence for their relative to continue to live independently, knowing there will be someone on hand to help them if they have a fall. It is fantastic news that this is being rolled out across the whole of Lancashire to benefit our residents."



## Industry

We were proud to host the North West TSA telecare surgery at our Leyland head office. The telecare surgeries are held bi-annually in each region. They are delivered by the technology enabled care (TEC) industry regulator, the Telecare Service Association (TSA). This year saw more than 20 delegates including service members and commissioners attend the event.

The surgeries give representatives from TSA membership organisations, the opportunity to discuss topics and news items relevant to the telecare industry. The aim is to learn from each other and share knowledge and best practice together.

## Awards

### ITEC Awards – Double winners

We were thrilled to be announced as double winners for ITEC Awards 2019 winning both the Integrated TEC Services Award and the ITEC Award - Individual TEC Leadership Award. The awards celebrate the positive impact Technology Enabled Care services have on the lives of millions of people in the UK.

TSA Chief Executive, Alyson Scurfield said “Organisation like Progress Lifeline make a huge difference to the lives of people here in the UK and worldwide. The ITEC Awards are designed to celebrate the very best the TEC industry has to offer and is a hallmark of quality for both those shortlisted and the winners. It’s a great achievement and I’d like to congratulate Progress Lifeline and Loraine Simpson on winning these significant and exciting awards.”

### TSA QSF Award

Once again we were delighted to successfully achieve certification of the TSA’s Quality

Standards Framework (QSF) making this our 13th successive year of achieving the highest industry standard.

## Community & Charity

### St Catherine’s Hospice

Progress Lifeline joined other local services at St Catherine’s Hospice to provide a monthly drop in advice hub for the people of Lancashire. The hub is part of the Compassionate Communities project, which aims to empower local people across Central Lancashire to help themselves and each other, when facing serious illness and bereavement.

### The Alzheimer’s Society

Progress Lifeline raised over £8500 this year for The Alzheimer’s Society. 19 members of staff along with five supportive family members and friends tackled a gruelling 22 mile hike around Cumbria's beautiful Coniston Lake to help raise money for this amazing charity.

### Macmillan Cancer Support

Our yearly office Macmillan coffee morning, with its raffles and best cake competitions raised over £750 for this incredible charity.





# Our Customers

**“Putting customers at the heart of our service, we continue to support people to live safely, confidently and independently at home”**

## Customer satisfaction survey results

Throughout the year we contacted over 1000 of our service users to ask about customer satisfaction.

### Highlights

- 97.4% said they were satisfied with how long it took us to answer their call
- 97.6% of customers found our operators helpful
- 96.9% said they were satisfied with the service they had been provided
- 97.1% of customers said they would recommend our service to friends and family



## Our customers are the key driving force for our evolving services

### Society & demographics

#### Long term health conditions and an ageing population

The UK population is projected to continue growing, reaching over 74 million by 2039. We all want to live well, keep our independence and age well.

However the population in the UK is getting older with 18% aged 65 and over and 2.4% aged 85 and over. Alongside this about 15 million people in England have a long-term health condition which needs to be managed with medicine or other treatments.

Progress Lifeline helps people to remain independent both outside and within their homes for longer. Our knowledge and experience means we have a good position in the market place. We offer a range of packages which can be tailor made to suit individual requirements. We put our customers at the heart of our service and we continue to support people to live safely, confidently and independently.

### Customer case study 1

#### Progress Lifeline service user John tells us his story of living with dementia, and how our home technology and remote monitoring helps him and his family.

John is in his 60s and lives with his wife Kath. They have two grown-up sons who live close by with families of their own.

For most of his life, John has been a very active person, however his health took a turn for the worse two years ago when he was diagnosed with vascular dementia.



Vascular dementia caused John to have a series of minor strokes and he started to suffer cognitive decline. John found himself leaving the car engine running, leaving the gas on (before swapping to an induction hob), and experiencing hallucinations. It also caused him to fall a lot, and Alzheimer's Society North West recommended John and Kath look into remote home monitoring, personal pendant alarms and telecare equipment to support John and Kath in their home.

#### The Progress Lifeline Solution

John was provided with telecare from Progress Lifeline, which has helped the couple feel more confident living at home. This included a red button personal pendant alarm and a falls detector, both of which



he wears at home and can quickly and easily press for help should he have a medical emergency. The falls detector also automatically detects if John falls and, without the need for physically pressing the button, it sends an alert to the alarm response centre who will get help to him.

Additionally, after an assessment from the Progress Lifeline installer team, smoke alarms and heat detectors connected 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to the Progress Lifeline monitoring centre were installed in their home.

### **Outcome**

John admits he has good days and bad days but since his diagnosis, he has thrown himself into living as positive and as independent a life as possible.

John says: "I've had a few falls since I've had the Progress Lifeline service and the swift response from the operators has given us a lot of confidence that I'll get help quickly if I fall and I'm on my own at home.

Kath adds: "I feel much more at ease having the Progress Lifeline telecare equipment. It allows John to still maintain his independence by staying at home on his own when I go out and makes me feel reassured. Our family are really pleased that we've got the telecare equipment as well."

The Progress Lifeline telecare equipment has played a part in supporting John to enjoy his time at home with his family and reduced anxiety for John and Kath about John being on his own.



## Customer case study 2

### Progress Lifeline supporting people who are deaf and living with dementia

Jane and David live in Fleetwood with Jane's elderly mother, Susan. Both Jane and her mother are registered deaf and Susan also has Alzheimer's. Jane is her mother's full-time carer. Last year, Susan's progressing Alzheimer's symptoms caused her to start falling frequently. Because they are both deaf, Jane struggled to know if her mother needed help when they were in different rooms of their home.

On top of this Susan's sleeping patterns were becoming erratic, and she was growing anxious when Jane wasn't around – and in turn Jane became increasingly worried about her mother's safety and well-being. When Susan suffered a broken hip after a fall at home, an Adult Services assessment team recommended the installation of Progress Lifeline's telecare equipment in their home to support the family.

Two Progress Lifeline installers (one with British Sign Language (BSL) training) attended the property to install a range of telecare equipment to ease the strain on the family. The technology package included: a personal pendant alarm connected to the Progress Lifeline alarm response centre, a falls detector which Susan wears round her wrist, and a Care Assist vibrating watch that Jane or David can wear which alerts them if Susan needs help.

Additionally, door and bed sensors were also installed which connect to a flashing beacon which Jane and David keep in their bedroom. The flashing beacon alerts Jane and David if Susan has got out of bed and not returned within a certain period of time, indicating that Susan may need help.



Jane and David now have increased peace of mind and confidence day and night. They feel secure that if Susan needs help, they will be alerted immediately but also know that there is additional support from our Progress Lifeline alarm response centre 24 hours a day. Susan's anxiety about being left alone has also decreased knowing that Jane will be alerted should she need her. The reduced worry and stress has had a positive impact on their health and wellbeing.

Since having the Progress Lifeline telecare equipment installed, Jane and David say that: "It's been a massive help and a godsend.

Without Progress Lifeline's interventions we would have been broken; we were getting no sleep and were under a huge amount of stress and worry. The flashing beacon and vibrating watch with the alarm delay facility have made the most difference to us, allowing us to gauge at night when we need to help my mother or when she can manage on her own".

The Progress Lifeline telecare equipment is now being used alongside additional support including carers and district nurses attending during the day. Susan is much more comfortable (and safe) and has been able to stay living at home with her family.



### Customer case study 3

**Lynda is a retired nurse from Lancashire. Three years ago she suffered a stroke. This is Lynda & Ron's story.**

Lynda is a retired nurse from Lancashire. Three years ago she suffered a stroke, leaving her requiring full-time care from her newly retired husband. This event was life-changing for the couple, who were looking forward to enjoying their independence and retirement together.

After looking after other people throughout her long nursing career, Lynda now found herself requiring care and support. The effects of the stroke left Lynda experiencing regular blackouts, which culminated in her breaking her wrist and thumb when she fell and left her extremely worried and anxious when she was alone at home in case it should happen again. Extra pressure was put on the family as someone always had to be at home with Lynda in case she should fall or become unwell.

Last year, while attending a stroke support group, Lynda met the Progress Lifeline team, who told her about personal pendant alarms and telecare sensors which could help her live safely and independently at home, and would provide peace of mind to the couple.

After an assessment of her needs, Progress Lifeline provided Lynda with a personal pendant alarm and a falls detector. This automatically connects to our alarm response centre if it detects that she has fallen – she doesn't even need to physically press the button. We can connect straight away and check to see if she is ok or if she needs help. A KeySafe was installed at the side of the house so that the couples' family and the emergency services can access the house in an emergency.



Lynda was also anxious about answering the door when she is alone at home and so a bogus caller button was installed at the side of the front door, which allows her to press it should she feel vulnerable and the Progress Lifeline alarm response centre can listen in to make sure she is safe.

#### Outcome

- Less anxiety and worry for the couple
- Immediate alert in the event of a fall
- Respite for carer/husband
- Greater confidence and independence

Lynda says, "Having the Progress Lifeline service has given me back my independence. I'm able to have a shower on my own and I feel safe when my husband goes out because I know I'm not on my own - help is available at the touch of the button. I can't thank the team enough, they really have changed our lives. We'd be lost without the Progress Lifeline service".

Lynda's husband is now able to leave the house for short periods of time, giving him respite and reassurance that help is available for Lynda while he is out, should she need it.

He says, "As a carer, I sometimes felt I'd lost my independence as I couldn't leave the house without worrying about Lynda and rushing back home. Now we have the Progress Lifeline service, I have been able to re-establish some social activities and feel so much better knowing that help is always on hand for my wife and they will contact me straight away in an emergency."

# Our Performance

We always aim to match or exceed the Telecare Services Association (TSA) key performance requirements

## Call handling

The target was set to answer 97.5% of calls within 60 seconds and to answer 99% of calls answered within 3 minutes.

We achieved over 98% of calls being answered in 60 seconds, as well as over 99% being answered within 180 seconds.

## Installations

Our target was to meet TSA standards for responding to installation requests (90% of urgent requests in 2 days and 100% in 5 days, 90% of non-urgent installation requests in 15 days and 100% in 20 days). These targets were all met.

We achieved 100% 11 out of 12 months, achieving 98% in January. We increased our installation resource and developed new processes to improve performance moving forward.

## Emergency Home Response

In the areas where we provide our Emergency Home Response service we aimed to comply with TSA standards of 90% mobile response call outs to be achieved within 45 minutes and 100% in 60 minutes.

We achieved 92.8% in reaching our customers within 45 mins. In the majority of case we actually managed to get to our customers in under 25 minutes knocking a full 20 minutes of the target time. We also reached 98.4% of all customers being within 60 minutes. The remaining 1.6% dip was due to increased traffic where our responders were driving in peak rush hour traffic.





# 2020 and beyond

**Our strategy for the future is extremely exciting despite the challenging times 2020 has brought.**

## COVID-19 National lockdown March 2020

As our financial year ended, we as a country went into a national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We as an organisation knew that the wellbeing of our customers and our staff was our absolute priority. We adhered to all the Public Health England guidance and implemented the working protocols advised by local and international authorities.

We continue to ensure that the highest possible hygiene standards are maintained, throughout every aspect of our service. All our colleagues who are in contact with customers must wear full personal protective equipment and follow strict procedures.

## Future strategy

2020 has brought about challenging times but as an organisation we have successfully adapted our services despite the pandemic.

We have had some very successful outcomes so far. So for the rest of 2020 and 2021 we will be focusing on our new or enhanced services including:

- Welfare calls
- Self install service
- New products
- E-commerce
- Hospital discharge packages
- Growing our Emergency Home Response



We will also continue to work on the following initiatives

## UK telephone digitalisation

We continue to work collaboratively with the TSA and equipment providers in preparation for the 2025 digitalisation of the UK's telephony network. Our dedicated project team has been invited to take part in testing with equipment providers and BT.

## New technology to enhance the service we provide

This year we have launched our new Footprint device - a GPS location device, pendant alarm & falls detector all-in-one. Its primary function is to provide security and peace of mind and can take the worry out of leaving the house on your own. Ideal for those who want independence but are: prone to falling, the elderly, dementia patients, people with epilepsy and those with learning disabilities. We will be excited to develop a wider audience that we can help with this versatile new alarm.

## Prevention

As always our customers are at the heart of what we do – so we will be continuing with our customer focus groups and working with them to provide help and support for; falls prevention, hospital discharge and living independently for longer at home.



## Contact us



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