

Subject:	North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board - Community Alarm/Telecare Service transition from Analogue to Digital (IP)
Purpose:	That the North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership update the Integrated Joint Board on the transition for Community Alarm/Telecare Services transition from Analogue to Digital Service Internet Protocol (IP)
Recommendation:	The Integrated Joint Board is asked to: (i) Note the content of the report; (ii) Consider the information and proposals/implications detailed therein.

Glossary of Terms	
NHS AA	NHS Ayrshire and Arran
NAHSCP	North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership
TEC	Technology Enabled Care
TSA	Telecare Service Association
IP	Internet Protocol

1.	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
1.1	This report outlines how the North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership will support North Ayrshire individuals through the Telecommunication providers Analogue to Digital switchover. Community Alarm/Telecare users, in North Ayrshire, currently receive their service via technology supported by analogue phone lines however from 2025 the current analogue system will be completely terminated and replaced by a digital Internet Protocol (IP) system. Therefore Community Alarm/Telecare users will require to have digital phone lines, in place within their homes, in order to access Telecare and Community Alarm technology from 2025 onwards.
2.	BACKGROUND
2.1	North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership currently delivers a Community Alarm and Telecare service to over 5,000 individuals across North Ayrshire both on the mainland and islands of Cumbrae and Arran. Individuals who access the Community Alarm and Telecare system have to have technology installed by NAHSCP staff, which is connected through their analogue phone lines, allowing them to access and request help and support via a Call Monitoring and Alarm Receiving Centre. The Call Monitoring and Alarm Receiving Centre, once an individual requests support, will direct calls to a variety of sources including NAHSCP Telecare/Community Alarm staff; Medical services; Emergency services; Family; Next of Kin.

2.2	Users of the Community Alarm/Telecare service in North Ayrshire currently generate, in excess of 20,000 calls, via Community Alarm/Telecare equipment, per month, with the Community Alarm/Telecare staff responding to approximately 5,000 alarm activations each month.
2.3	Community Alarm/Telecare users have a main Community Alarm unit installed in their homes, which can allow for numerous peripherals to be added, in order to support and monitor individuals and to assist them remain independent in their own homes. Examples of peripheral technology includes things such as Smoke Detectors, Flood Detectors, Falls Detectors, Property Exit Sensors, Epilepsy Sensors etc.
2.4	This technology is vital in supporting individuals in North Ayrshire to continue to live safely in their own homes, with access to care and support when required. Community Alarm/Telecare technology is also utilised throughout North Ayrshire to: support individuals' home from hospital; to avoid/prevent hospital admissions and to minimise individuals requiring to leave their homes and move into long term care settings.
2.5	Telecommunications providers, of which there are over 600 in the UK, have confirmed that all analogue telephone services will be switched off and replaced by digital systems by 2025. Ofcom and telecommunication providers have confirmed that systems which are currently reliant on analogue and voice band data will be affected by this change. This includes systems such as security alarms, cash terminals, fire alarms and Community Alarm/Telecare systems. Both BT and Virgin have commenced the transition from analogue to digital and both companies have stated they will be ceasing installations of analogue telephone lines in 2022. From that period onwards both of those providers will only offer digital services.
	<u>Associated Risks</u>
2.6	<p>Ofcom and the Telecare Standards Association, (TSA), are working alongside the Technology Enabled Care sector, Regulators and the Scottish Government to understand the challenges presented by this transition and to support Partnerships/Local Authorities through this process. A number of concerns and risks associated with the transition have been highlighted and these are detailed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Telecommunications providers will work to different timescales within their own operational and strategic plans. This will have implications for individuals within North Ayrshire who receive telecommunication services from a wide range of providers as they may transition sooner than the 2025 deadline. There is currently no definitive date of when in 2025 the transition to digital will occur.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some telecommunications providers have commenced using digital switch networks and it has been documented with Ofcom that there have been instances that this has interfered with the functionality of current equipment providing Telecare service, resulting in a loss of information.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership has spent an average of £191,634 per year in purchasing new Community Alarm/Telecare equipment in the last three years, (16/17, 17/18, 18/19). The Telecare equipment providers have all already indicated that the costs for Partnerships/Local Authorities to purchase the new digital equipment will be significantly higher. From the evidence already available the prices of the new equipment are actually double the current costs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At present a lot of Community Alarm/Telecare equipment is recycled. For the first 12 months of the 2025 implementation it is envisaged that there will be no opportunity to recycle any equipment. This, again, will have a negative budgetary impact for the Partnership.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providers of Community Alarm/Telecare equipment continue to undertake testing to identify interoperability and establish how much, if any, of current equipment will be compatible with the digital system. However, it is likely that upgraded digitally enabled Community Alarm/Telecare equipment will require to be installed for the majority of users to ensure people continue to have access to support via their Community Alarm/Telecare equipment.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digitally enabled Community Alarm/Telecare equipment, whilst currently available, is in the early stages of development and is significantly more expensive to purchase and maintain than existing equipment. Health and Community Care staff have already begun to explore the range of digitally enabled equipment available but because a lot of it is still being tested for its operability and connectivity, it has been decided not to begin to purchase this until such times as confirmation of suitability has been determined.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Ayrshire's geographical footprint is, in many areas rural and isolated with areas where signal strength is poor or indeed non-existent. Therefore there are risks associated with digital connectivity and availability of digital service.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital equipment will not offer the same back up provision that currently exists within the analogue system. Currently there is a 24 hour back up provided by the analogue system in the event of power failures etc., When the systems transfer over to digital the standards around this kind of support will vary between each telecommunication provider. For example, BT are stating that, in the event of a power outage, their digital solution may only provide back up for up to one hour whilst Virgin's proposal is more in line with the current position of 24 hours. Other telecommunication providers have yet to identify their positions on this. Therefore within Health and Community Care there will require to be several business continuity/escalation plans regarding each of the providers once their positions become solidified. Currently within Health and Community Care the Community Alarm/Telecare service has commenced ingathering the details of each Community Alarm/Telecare users' phone provider. It is anticipated that BT, Virgin and Sky will be the three main telecommunication providers across North Ayrshire.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current research and understanding of security and protection of data is limited and this needs to be considered as digital equipment is further developed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing has commenced with the main telecommunication provider, BT, using a lab to test their digital networks with Community Alarm/Telecare equipment. However the outcome of this has not yet been released.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transition to digital may be more costly to users as line rental costs will increase to broadband rental costs. Therefore individuals may cancel their much needed Community Alarm/Telecare service due to those costs and thus potentially place themselves at risk. This could have further knock on ramifications for the Partnership, for example, individuals requiring more substantial care packages or no longer being able to remain at home. This would have a negative impact on the budgets.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Alarm/Telecare installations will become more complicated as installation will be dependent on signal strength.
2.7	<p><u>Call Monitoring and Alarm Receiving Centre</u></p> <p>Hanover Scotland currently provide Call Monitoring and Alarm Receiving services for North Ayrshire and this contract is in place until 31 August 2020, with an option to extend for one further year to 31 August 2021.</p>
	<p>Hanover has an Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) solution in both its Glasgow and Edinburgh sites. ISDN is designed for handling multiple voice calls however this is different from the digital system that will be required for the transition.</p>
	<p>Hanover has confirmed that by October 2019 they will have a digital device to digital alarm receiving centre test environment. This is to test out their ability to receive digital calls and Hanover will utilise this to test the various protocols required for Call Monitoring and Alarm Receiving with a digital system.</p>
	<p>Hanover has confirmed that they will provide digital and analogue connection for as long as it is possible, which will help support Partnerships/Local Authority with migration.</p>
2.8	<p><u>Community Alarm and Telecare Equipment Costs</u></p> <p>As already outlined there will financial implications for the Partnership with the transition from analogue to digital. Scottish Government has already stated that there is no additional money to support Partnerships/Local Authorities with the transition of analogue to digital and that any financial implications have to be met by each individual Partnership/Local Authority area.</p>
	<p>Within Community Care Services the team has commenced an action plan regarding the preparation work that is required in the lead up to transition commencing in 2022. However there are still so many variables to be finalised that it makes some of that work difficult. What is evident though is that new digital Community Alarm/Telecare equipment is going to be more costly than the existing analogue equipment. Taking it on the average spend of £191,634 per year, currently, from 2022 the average cost would escalate to £383,268 annually.</p>
	<p>In addition, none of the Telecare providers have confirmed, as yet, that the current analogue equipment will be in any way compatible with the digital system. Ergo if the Partnership had to replace the current analogue equipment with an updated digital version of kit for every single user, utilising the service at present, then that would be a minimum additional cost of £975,000 to the Partnership over 2022 to 2025. As already outlined the developers of the new equipment have still to confirm the compatibility of the existing equipment with the new digital kit. However it is important for the IJB to be aware of the possible financial implications.</p>

3.	PROPOSALS
3.1	<p>It is important that the IJB are sighted on the aforementioned digital development and the possible proposals that may require further exploration. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Alarm/Telecare service is a generic service and is currently not age or condition restrictive. In consideration of the potential cost implications linked to the digital transition and beyond there may be the requirement for the introduction of a specific eligibility criteria to access the Community Alarm/Telecare service. It should however be noted that this would have consequences for individuals in North Ayrshire and may increase reliance on other care and support services. • Due to the requirement to review all of the individuals who have Community Alarm/Telecare equipment and the possibility of having to replace existing Community Alarm/Telecare equipment there will be significant cost implications relating to the implementation of this project. <p>Both of the aforementioned points will be explored in a further paper to the IJB once clearer implementation timescales have been given by the Telecommunication providers; the Telecare equipment providers and the Scottish Government.</p>
3.2	<u>Anticipated Outcomes</u>
	The anticipated outcomes of this paper are to update the Integrated Joint Board on the potential impact of the forthcoming analogue to digital transition. By early identification of the proposals, financial implications and potential risks it is anticipated that the service will be in a stronger position to plan and deliver a safe and effective switchover for Community Alarm/Telecare users in North Ayrshire.
3.3	<u>Measuring Impact</u>
	Not Applicable
4.	IMPLICATIONS

Financial:	There will be financial implications linked to the costs associated with the analogue to digital switchover. Further details of what those are will be provided in a later paper to the IJB.
Human Resources:	There are no implications for NAHSCP staff as a result of this report.
Legal:	There are no known legal implications as a result of this report.
Equality:	There are no equality implications as a result of this report.
Children and Young People	There may be implications for Children and Young People who currently utilise Community Alarm/Telecare services in North Ayrshire.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no Environmental or Sustainability implications as a result of this report.
Key Priorities:	The information contained within this report, and associated risks, may have implications for Key Priorities within the Partnership.
Risk Implications:	There are Risk Implications, and these have been outlined in section 2.1
Community Benefits:	N/A

Direction Required to Council, Health Board or Both	Direction to :-	
	1. No Direction Required	
	2. North Ayrshire Council	
	3. NHS Ayrshire & Arran	
	4. North Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire & Arran	

5.	CONSULTATION
5.1	Representatives from Community Care Services have been involved in regular consultation with the TSA, Scottish Government, Telecommunication and Telecare providers. This consultation will continue throughout the preparation for transition from analogue to digital and will incorporate consultation with users of Community Alarm/Telecare services in North Ayrshire. In addition staff from the Community Care Services team are members of the networking groups who meet to discuss this transitional programme of work and the implementation of the analogue to digital strategy.
6.	CONCLUSION
6.1	Members of the IJB are asked to note the information included within this report. A further paper will be submitted at a later date to provide an updated position regarding the analogue to digital transition.

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