

Sefton Careline makes a good call

Jo Alty, Careline Manager, Sefton Careline

Sefton Careline is preparing for the UK's transition to a digital communications network, which is set to be complete by the end of 2025. Sefton Careline Manager Joanne Alty tells us more about how they've worked with Tunstall to ensure the people it supports continue to receive its life enhancing services.

The digital switch is having a huge impact on community alarm services across the country. It's not just a case of choosing new home units, there's a lot more to think about. For example, we were running on an old version of PNC, but it's not simply a matter of upgrading to a new monitoring centre and hardware and software, there are numerous options, and these can influence the way the team is structured and the processes it uses. Staff need to be trained in how to use new technology to feel confident in their roles and get the most out of it for our service users. And, of course, how and when you invest in new technology needs to be carefully considered.

We knew we needed to develop a strategy that included all of these areas and began by reviewing the market to assess the various platforms available for delivering our service. In the end we chose to remain with Tunstall, and looked to them to help us with our further decision making. Careline has been working with Tunstall for many years, and they really understand our service to the point where they've become an extension of our team. They're experts at what they do in every aspect from making recommendations about technology solutions, to training, implementation and service delivery models, and we work really well together.

We worked with various members of the Tunstall team to clarify our needs and how they could best be met, and chose to move to Tunstall's PNC Software as a Service (SaaS) platform. Our experience of PNC is that it is best in class, and our operators find it very easy to use. The SaaS format also enabled us to reshape the service, using smarter workflows to increase capacity and therefore sustainability. PNC's workflow guidance also enables quicker response times, which is reassuring for our service users and their families.

Moving to a SaaS platform avoids the time and costs associated with sourcing, maintaining and managing hardware infrastructure, provides robust business continuity and means we're always operating on the latest version of software. It also means operators can work from home, enabling the service to become more agile if needed. Importantly it's also IP-enabled, so we are ready for the move to digital. Careline and Tunstall worked closely together to ensure project was managed and delivered without impacting on service users, and that the data migration was seamless.

We were also supported by Tunstall's specialist training team, ensuring operators felt confident in using the system and making sure we can fully realise its capabilities, making the most of our investment. Trainers also delivered courses to Installers and a Trusted Assessor on assessing, prescribing, installing and programming equipment, helping them to work more effectively and deliver an even better customer experience.

It's been so easy working with Tunstall. The whole team is really hands on and always there when we need them. This is life critical equipment so it's vital that we work with a brand and people that we trust, and their support means I can sleep at night.