



Shedfield Lodge
Caring through Understanding

Safety Monitoring In Communal Areas in Care Homes.

We are an advocate of Safety Monitoring and have been since 2012.

My first inspiration was during a meeting with my Manager when the topic of discussion was 'unwitnessed falls' around the care home. The care home would get spates of falls only to ebb off for a while and later return as different Residents' would arrive. On closer examination it was very much dependant on the Resident themselves and not the environment around them. The amount of Residents we would get that were prone to falling were becoming more and more and although we tried to limit the risk during their stay with us it was impossible to monitor unless we provided a one on one care service.

It was a reflection on my 10 years Police Service that inspired me next. It was always said that one could not walk from one end of Portsmouth City to the other without being followed the whole way by Safety Monitoring.

With Safety Monitoring we could monitor the falls closer and even better watch the lead up to the fall to see if there was a trigger and also see the seriousness of the fall to give the paramedics the exact story of what had happened so the right treatment could be administered.

A few weeks went by with thoughts on the day and how it could help at Shedfield Lodge Care Home.

The first problem was the cost implication and authority to install in a Care Home.

The cost would be a direct hit on the bottom line and the return would be lengthy with a return on the hardware over years rather than months.

I found a local installer and after briefing them on what I wanted they suggested to help with cash flow to install a few cameras at a time and add further cameras when the funds became available.



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www.shedfieldlodge.com

The cost of each camera worked out at around £60.00 each and the DVR recorder £250.00 plus the cost of the install and cable. The TV monitors were at first second hand at a cost of £60.00 each. These are optional as one can get the images on the office computer for free.

A total cost for 3 cameras installed worked out to be less than £1000.00.

Before I took the plunge I had to then think of Policies and Procedures and authorities. This proved easier than I thought and before long had a full Policy and Procedure folder put together from our Employment Law Consultants free of charge.

I then put it out to all family members, staff, advocates and Residents themselves that I was going to install Safety Monitoring in communal areas and I met little resistance.

The only concerns raised were by staff thinking it was going to be like 'Big Brother' watching them. Once I assured them it was to protect them and the Residents, they were appeased.

The whole team identified that by having Safety Monitoring, it would be beneficial for all and would be an invaluable care tool moving forward.

Another main reason for the Safety Monitoring would be Peace of Mind for the Provider and Management team. In this I mean that the right care is being provided at the right time with factual evidence being given to professionals. The management team could log on to the cameras 24 hours a day from the convenience of either the office or at home and witness live, all that was going on in the home. I know I would sleep better as a Provider knowing that if anything happened it would be recorded, protecting both my staff and the Residents.

The install of three cameras was then carried out with three monitors placed around the home for staff to view all the cameras in situ. One monitor was placed in the manager's office, one in the kitchen on the ground floor and one in the smoking area whereby staff could monitor what was going on in the home whilst on their break. We initially covered the main lounge, stairs and front door with the cameras.

It was not long after the install that we had a visit from the CQC for their regular 18 month inspection.



I met with much resistance from them and was informed to take the Safety Monitoring down as it was not appropriate and breached their regulations and privacy laws.

I apposed this and stood my ground and showed the Policies and Procedures I had put together and the authorities I had from the families and this seemed to change their minds and it remained in situ. I was a little concerned the Inspection report would come back negative but it did not so they obviously were happy for me to continue.

Seven years later into having Safety Monitoring we now have 16 cameras covering ALL communal areas, exits and outside areas.

During the time we have had Safety Monitoring there have been numerous occasions that we have all benefitted from their presence. Here are a few examples:

- There was one occasion whereby a Resident was seen on the floor picking up crumbs having put themselves on the floor. As soon as a staff member approached they were seen to lay down. Without Safety Monitoring an ambulance would have been called as it would have been recorded as an unwitnessed fall. As a result of the Safety Monitoring we were able to establish an ambulance was not needed and it was dealt with in house. This in turn saved so much time for my staff who would have had to stay with the Resident until the ambulance arrived, sometimes hours on previous history and obviously the time of the ambulance service and not to mention the stress to the Resident who may have had to go to hospital as they would not have known if they had hit their head.

Normal protocol for the ambulance service for an unwitnessed fall that had potential for a head injury would be to take the Resident to A and E for a check up. This would, depending on the time of day need a member of our staff to go in the ambulance with the Resident. A further cost to the care home.

- Another example was when a Resident was found half way down the stairs on a landing in a seated position. This was noticed by a staff member just after the fall, however at the time the staff member had no idea how the incident happened.



The Resident stated that he was pushed down the stairs.

When the incident was reviewed it was established that he had lost his footing and not pushed by anyone. We informed the family immediately and when they came to see him the next day the Resident informed them that he had been pushed down the stairs.

The family then raised a complaint which was immediately resolved by showing them the Safety Monitoring.

It was clear on the Safety Monitoring that seconds before the fall another Resident turned off the light on the stairs before he went to bed. The camera was able to pick this up even in the dark.

Also as a result of this we had our maintenance team adjust the stairway lights so they could not be switched off and are now permanently on.

Had we not have had the benefit of the Safety Monitoring we would have had a complaint on our hands to deal with regarding a Service User being pushed. We would have had to notify Safeguarding and CQC which all takes time and an ambulance at the time of the fall.

The cost element in all of the above without Safety Monitoring would be in the £1000's just on that incident.

- Not so long ago we had a situation whereby a Resident was on the floor in a corridor with 2 other male Residents stood over him. A member of staff was passing and saw the situation having missed what had happened.

The staff member notified the management team to look at the Safety Monitoring to see what had happened and in doing so saw that the male on the floor tripped after stepping backwards and fell to the ground. Seconds later 2 Residents were walking down the corridor and came across the male. There was no injury seen by staff and he was assisted to his feet.

Without Safety Monitoring we would have had to call the ambulance as it was an unwitnessed fall and we would not have known if he hit his head. We would also have had to notify Safeguarding as the situation looked like he had been pushed to the floor by two other Residents. The call to the families would not have been a good one either.



Again another saving for the NHS whereby we did not have to call the emergency services.

- There are also other ways in which Safety Monitoring can assist the care home and an example here is when I had a member of staff whistle blow on another staff member having assaulted a Resident by kicking them.

Safety Monitoring was viewed and it was seen that a staff member was handing out a drink to a Resident in the foyer next to the stairs. The Resident was sat on a couch with 2 other Residents.

This resident did not want her drink and so the staff member was seen to point at her whilst standing over her. The Resident then kicked the staff member lightly on the shin. The staff member's reaction was to kick back immediately and then walk off. The whistle blower only saw the staff member kicking out and not the lead up, which was obviously later seen by management.

Without Safety Monitoring it would have been one staff member's word against the other as during the initial enquiry they denied the incident happened until we showed them the Safety Monitoring.

It was as a result of the Safety Monitoring that we managed to dismiss the staff member immediately and eventually had them put on the POVA list never to work in care again.

Other benefits Safety Monitoring has are the remote access. This means that the management team can view the Safety Monitoring from any location in the world providing they have access to internet.

As an add on to the Safety Monitoring, we identified an area in the home that had potential for an accident as the door opened out to a hallway and did not have a window to see who or what was on the other side. We have now managed to put a camera on one side and a monitor on the other so before the door is opened one can see the other side on the monitor taking out the chance of opening the door onto a Resident or other person.

We currently have 12 cameras, however as a result of expanding I have had to purchase a new DVR in order to accept the cameras at a cost of £500.00. Over time I have also changed the cameras to HD zoom lenses so staff get a better clearer picture. These new cameras come at a cost of £90.00.



Overall as a result of Safety Monitoring we can reduce the calling of the ambulance, saving the NHS tens of thousands of pounds every year. Also reducing the distress caused to an individual whom without Safety Monitoring would have had to have waited, without being moved, sometimes for many hours, for an ambulance, then to be taken to A and E, waited to be seen, treated and released, which can also have taken many hours. All this would have been with an escort, therefore taking a valuable member of staff from the home, creating extra pressure on remaining staff or having the cost of an extra staff member to cover.

We have as a result of Safety monitoring been able to sign off Safeguarding in days rather than dragging out for sometimes weeks and months. It has also stopped the Safeguarding teams coming out to the home which used to take hours of time from the management team. They are now happy for the Safety Monitoring to be sent to them for them to view before making a decision on whether further evidence is needed.

We have searched the internet for a cost breakdown into call outs as a result of a 999 call.

£7.00 To answer a 999 call.

£180.00 Dispatch an Ambulance.

£233.00 Take a patient to hospital.

Taken from the Independent.co.uk 16/4/2018.

Then you have the costs of the hospital staff with possible X rays, scans etc and more importantly the distress of the patient/resident going into hospital, waiting around for hours on end and then being discharged in the early hours of the morning on occasions.

Additional costs to this on occasions would be your own staff, as on many occasions the ambulance crew have requested an escort. This in turn reduces the staffing levels in the home and forces the hands of the care home to get an extra member of staff into the home to cover.

During 2018 we at Shedfield Lodge had 16 unwitnessed falls.

Of those unwitnessed falls as a result of having Safety Monitoring we called the ambulance service 3 times saving 13 callouts last year alone.



We continue to expand on our Safety Monitoring and over the coming months we have identified an area in the back garden that would benefit all as often our Residents walk around the grounds especially in the summer months.

We truly believe that having Safety Monitoring at Shedfield Lodge assists us greatly in providing a safer environment for our residents to live in, a safer environment for our staff to work in and all those who visit Shedfield Lodge. Safety Monitoring enables us to respond quicker to incidents and in a vast majority of cases gives us the opportunity to act before a potential incident can occur, therefore affording us the ability to proactively reduce potential risks.

Just on a conclusion it is only since late 2018 the paramedics upon arrival to the care home on an emergency call out are now requesting to see the Safety Monitoring footage as part of their protocol so they can make the right judgement call and give the correct treatment.

