Alzheimer's Society
United Against Dementia

How dementia-friendly technology can improve lives

Technology can offer huge potential benefits for people living with dementia, their families and care providers. Whilst not a solution for everyone, technology, such as telecare or apps, can work in a variety of ways to empower and support independence, manage risks, improve health, be enjoyable and aid loved ones.

Older People Housing Directors tell us that the main issues their residents/tenants with dementia face include:

- Frailty, memory loss, difficulties in maintaining their independence and managing their medication.

- Many people have a strong desire to remain in their own homes but are not able to get the care and support needed to make this safe or easy.

- Improving the quality of people's lives.

If you are reviewing your older people's housing strategy, it is important to consider how technology can maximise your housing with care or support offer in terms of:

- **Productivity** – Staff can be deployed more effectively and feel empowered to better support residents.

- **Prevention** – Residents can self-manage and healthcare or support issues can be detected earlier, reducing admissions to hospitals or care homes, minimising care packages and carer stress.

- **Outcomes** – Residents can enjoy a greater quality of life, with increased independence and wellbeing, and feel more in control and engaged in the community. They can be supported to remain safely in their own homes for as long as possible. This is better for the resident as they can remain at home and is more efficient for the landlord as they do not have to re-let the properties as this turnover is costly.

How does technology help housing providers?

- Technology provides more **proactive**, **preventive services** such as remote online consultations, medication support, 'I'm ok' services and daily living support.

- Provides **social activities**, befriending and digital inclusion support.

- Provides homes that adapt as people's circumstances and lifestyles change supporting them to live at home for longer.

- Simplifies tasks, such as reporting repairs via an easy to use tablet or app.

- Reduces anxiety and reassures family carers by offering 24-hour support.

What does my organisation need to do next?
Sign up to the dementia-friendly technology charter which recommends:

- **Assessment process** – The statutory right to a social care assessment should always include a consideration for dementia-friendly technology. Housing should engage with social care to carry out an inclusive assessment and consider the assessment in the development of a housing support plan and accommodation allocation.

- **Awareness** – Ensure housing teams know where to go to for advice on technology that can support individuals living with dementia.

- **Carers** – Carers' assessments also consider the role that technology can play in improving the life of a person caring for someone with dementia. Housing should consider the carers needs when developing housing support plans.

- **Access to information** – Accessible and easy to find information that lists where technology services are available in your local area with a link to the charter.

Technology that could help if...

You are worried about your safety

Property exit sensor
A property exit sensor will send a warning leaving the house.

Smoke detector
A monitored smoke detector will summon an immediate response should there be a fire.

Safer walking detector
An alarm that provides SOS calls and Safety zone monitoring so you can be found if lost or disorientated.

'I live by myself and want to keep it that way. My daughter and her family are close by but she worries about me forgetting things. What can I do to stay safe and independent if my GP says I have dementia?'

Sign up to the charter at
alzheimers.org.uk/technologycharter

or for further information, email
programmepartnerships@alzheimers.org.uk