Tunstall

Turning Technology into Care:

Advancing Digital Solutions for an Ageing Population

Foreword

Let's make it happen ...
Let's build a future where care empowers people – where technology and compassion work hand in hand to support individuals in living the lives they want, with dignity, independence, and peace of mind.

The pressure is global – but so is the opportunity
Across the world, health and care systems are facing growing pressure. Ageing populations, rising demand, and financial constraints are stretching resources thin. But this moment is more than a challenge – it's an opportunity. An opportunity to rethink how we deliver care, to shift from reacting to problems to preventing them, and to design services around people, not systems.

It's not about delivering more – it's about being smarter
After decades working in technology-enabled care, one thing is clear: the future isn't just about more infrastructure, more professionals, or more technology. It's about working smarter. It's about empowering individuals, predicting risks before they escalate, and enabling early support – closer to home and in the community.

From reactive systems to proactive care
Imagine a care system that senses change before a crisis happens. Where digital tools provide timely insights, connect families, and enable services to respond proactively. Where care is centred on people's needs, goals, and lives – not just their conditions. That future isn't a dream. It's already taking shape – and it's within reach.

Global lessons, local action
This report shares what we've learned from across the globe – real outcomes, successful models, and the enabling conditions that turn ambition into action. It also highlights the common barriers: fragmented systems, outdated funding structures, and a lack of public understanding.

The time to act is now
But these barriers are not insurmountable. With the right investment, policy leadership, and cross-sector collaboration, we can unlock a new era of care that is more connected, more sustainable, and more human.

Now is the time to be bold. To act with purpose. To create care systems that not only ease the pressure but transform lives and communities.

The future of care is not something to fear. It's something to believe in. Let's make it happen.

Emil Peters
Chief Executive Officer Tunstall Group

Purpose

Health and care systems around the world are facing a major turning point. Populations are ageing, demand for care is growing, and systems are under pressure due to limited resources and outdated ways of working.

In many countries, the future of care depends on three key changes:

- Shifting care from hospitals to the home and the community
- Moving from analogue to digital systems
- Focusing on prevention instead of treatment

Technology can support all three of these goals, helping people to live safely and independently at home. It reduces hospital visits and it modernises how care is delivered. But to make this shift happen, we also need new ways of funding care, better coordination, and updated policies.

This paper explores how technology can reduce pressure on health and care systems by preventing emergencies and supporting people earlier. It shares international examples and research that show what works (the “what”) and also looks at the conditions needed to scale these solutions (the “how”), including funding, access, and policy support.

In the final section, practical recommendations are made considering how technology can:

- Keep people independent for longer
- Reduce the need for expensive health and care services
- Support the transition to more proactive, community-based care

Index

A Global Shift in Health and Care 5

A Growing Global Challenge 7

What is Telecare? 9

From Hospitals to the Community 11

From Analogue to Digital: A Global Shift in Care 14

From Sickness to Prevention 17

Conclusions 20

Recommendations 22

A Global Shift in Health and Care

Around the world, we are seeing major changes. Populations are ageing, and more people need care. This is putting serious pressure on health and social care systems.

We need new ways to support older people so they can stay healthy, safe, and independent for as long as possible. One solution is to combine and integrate health and social care services, making them interoperable and making the most of funds available.

From Crisis Response to Prevention
When health and social care are aligned, care becomes more consistent, with people getting better support. This prevents emergencies and reduces hospital admissions. It can also improve how chronic conditions are managed.

An integrated system avoids duplication, supports long-term funding, and leads to better use of resources. Most importantly, it puts the person at the centre of care – tailoring support to their needs and wishes.

The Challenge of Funding
But integration is not easy. One of the biggest barriers is fragmented funding. Health and social care often have separate budgets, making it hard to invest in new, smart technology-based solutions. This makes long-term improvement and new investment across healthcare systems.

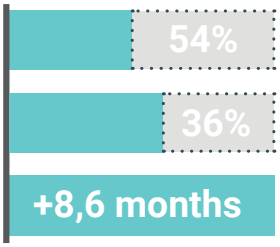
Local flexibility is important. Communities must meet local needs, but this often requires national support and support and funding models to make this possible.

The Potential Is Huge
But the benefits are clear. Countries that have successfully integrated services – like Spain and Finland – have seen big improvements in quality of life together with costs savings.

For example, when care solutions are more proactive and supported by technology, they can reduce hospital visits, help older people stay at home longer, and improve overall wellbeing.

But to get there, we need strong collaboration across sectors, better policy alignment, and investment in tools that prevent problems before they happen.

Why Telecare Matters
Telecare is a solution that supports this. It is no longer a reactive home-based solution, but one that is proactive. It includes smart sensors, remote monitoring, and early alerts that help identify problems before they turn into emergencies. In Spain, these solutions have led to major cost savings per person each year due to:



- 54% fewer emergency calls
- 36% fewer ambulance dispatches
- 8.6 extra months at home before needing care

Still, many places struggle to adopt telecare because of funding gaps, policy differences, and low public awareness.

Proactive Models Work
Advanced telecare solutions like Spain's Smarthabit program show how technology can monitor behaviour patterns, detect risks early, and reduce the need for emergency response. These systems also help reduce loneliness and improve emotional wellbeing by offering regular, proactive contact. But to scale these models, we need to overcome administrative barriers and make cross-sector collaboration the norm.

What Needs to Change
Research shows that investing in telecare leads to better outcomes for older adults, caregivers, and the healthcare system. To make this happen, governments should:

1. Create a national telecare strategy
   – Fix policy gaps and include telecare in long-term health plans
   – Expand access to reactive and proactive care models
2. Explore global funding models
   – Share learning between countries
   – Support local innovation with targeted funding
3. Partner with trusted providers
   – Use international experience to design and deliver proactive services
   – Shift the focus from sickness to prevention

From Crisis to Care – A Call to Action
Technology-enabled services must become a core part of future healthcare models. By integrating services, focusing on prevention, and investing in digital tools, countries can move away from crisis management towards smarter, people-centred systems. This reduces system pressure and allows older people to live more independently and with dignity.

But this change requires urgent action. It means:

- Breaking down silos between sectors
- Funding smarter solutions, not just more of them
- Putting prevention at the heart of care strategies

With the right commitment, we can create a system that works better for everyone.

A Growing Global Challenge

The world's population is ageing fast. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of people aged 60 and over will grow by 40% by 2030 and will double by 2050.

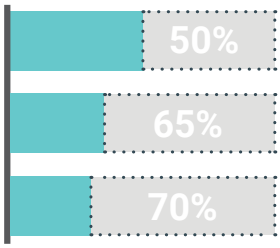
The United Nations supports this, estimates that people aged 65 and over will make up 16% of the world's population by 2050, compared to 10% in 2022.

As people age, many experience health issues like:

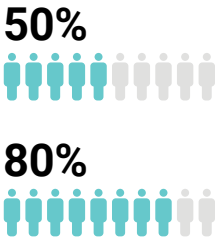
- Hearing and vision loss
- Back and neck pain
- Diabetes
- Dementia

The WHO notes that older people are more likely to live with multiple health conditions at the same time.

Long-Term Conditions Are Driving Healthcare Demand
These age-related and long-term conditions (LTCs) are placing a heavy burden on healthcare systems. For example, in the UK:



- Over 50% of all doctor visits are related to LTCs
- 65% of outpatient visits and
- 70% of hospital bed days are used by people with LTCs



LTCs become more common with age-affecting half of people by age 50, and 80% by age 65.

> *Prevention comes first, where care is closer to home [and] where patients have more control… We must move care away from hospitals and closer to the community, the NHS must become a Neighbourhood Health Service… At the moment we aren't good enough at treating people early in the community. We leave it to hospitals – and quite often that's too late. If we change this, it will save lives and money.*
>
> **Sir Keir Stamer**, *UK Prime Minister (May 2023)*

< BACK TO INDEX

Why We Must Rethink Care
This demographic shift means that healthcare systems must adapt to better support older people. Helping individuals stay independent for longer is key—not only for their wellbeing, but also to reduce pressure on hospitals and care services.

Across many countries health strategies now focus on:

- Moving care from hospitals into the community
- Shifting from analogue to digital systems
- Preventing illness, not just treating it

Technology plays a big role in all three. It can:

- Help people live safely at home
- Reduce emergency hospital visits
- Make care more modern and efficient

But to make this work, we need better funding models, stronger policy support, and coordination across sectors.

The Role of Telecare
Telecare – technology that helps monitor and support people remotely – is already showing strong benefits, especially when used proactively to prevent problems before they happen.

Even reactive telecare, where help is given after someone triggers an alarm, still adds great value and is part of many care strategies today.

However, many decision-makers and service commissioners face challenges:

- Lack of clear data on cost-effectiveness
- Limited funding from national budgets
- A growing trend to outsource services to private providers who may offer better value

Shared Benefits Across Systems
One of the challenges is that the benefits often help other parts of the system. For example:

- A service funded by social care might reduce pressure on the health system
- Or a health-funded tool might save money in social care

This makes it hard to decide who should pay, but it also shows how integrated care planning is important.

Technology-driven solutions, especially proactive and preventative telecare, are getting more attention from policymakers. They are searching for smart ways to meet the needs of ageing populations. These tools are designed to help people and families before a crisis happens – preventing harm and improving lives.

Mike Farrar, *former CEO of NHS Confed, Strategic Health Advisor*

< BACK TO INDEX

What is Telecare?

Telecare is a broad term. It includes many types of technology that support people – especially older adults or those with vulnerabilities – so they can live safely at home.

Some telecare solutions are reactive, like emergency buttons or fall sensors, which send an alert when something goes wrong.

Other telecare services are more proactive and personalised. They aim to spot risks early and prevent problems before they happen.

By using sensors and smart technology, telecare can:

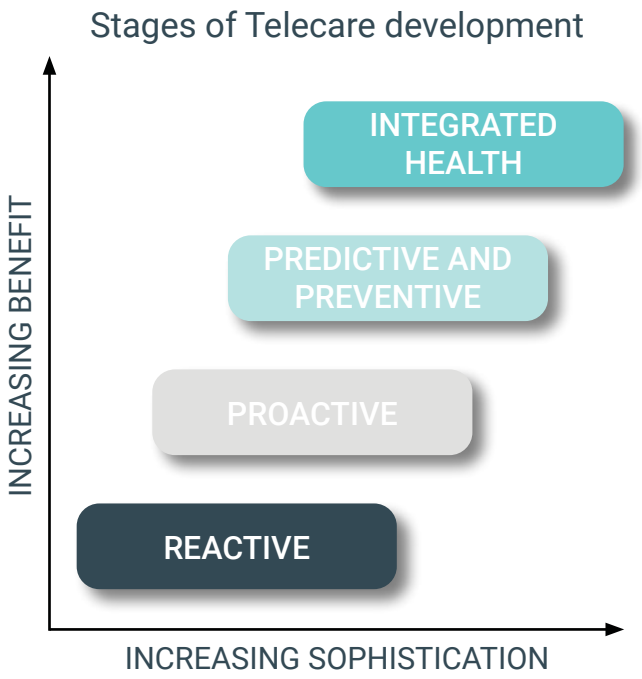
- Detect changes in behaviour
- Send alerts to family, professionals, or emergency services
- Support people without the need for full-time supervision

This helps people live more independently and reduces the need for hospital or care home stays.

From Reactive to Proactive Support
Modern telecare goes beyond emergency response. It can also include:

- Regular check-in phone calls
- Monitoring routines and daily activity
- Helping people who feel lonely or socially isolated
- Supporting carers with information and advice

This type of proactive support gives people and their families greater peace of mind and a more complete level of care. Importantly, it can be delivered without major changes to existing infrastructure, as seen in countries like Spain.



Personalised Support Matters Most
Proactive telecare works even better when it's tailored to each person's needs. Services can be adjusted over time as health, risk, or support needs change.

This approach means those with higher risks or more complex needs get the right help at the right time. And because these individuals often place the highest demands on healthcare, better support for them helps reduce pressure on the system.

Advanced telecare also uses data and predictive analytics to spot signs of trouble even earlier. This means professionals can step in sooner, preventing issues from becoming emergencies.

Understanding "Independence" and "Dependence"
It's also important to consider how countries define independence and dependence. These definitions affect who qualifies for state-funded support.

In many systems, people must be officially recognised as dependent before they can receive services to help them remain independent. It's a strange paradox, but how many care systems work?

Here are some examples:

- In the UK, assessments are based mostly on risk. Support is only given when specific needs are proven.
- In Spain, the 2006 Dependency Law made support a universal right, with three levels of dependency based on how much help people need in their daily life.
- In France, the focus is on autonomy. People are assessed based on their level of self-determination and how much of it they have lost.

These systems are all different and none are perfect. But they show how eligibility rules shape access to technology-based support and how it can either help or limit its use.

A Final Thought
While these national approaches are complex, one thing is clear:

We must rethink how we define who "deserves" help – especially if that help can keep people healthy and independent longer.

Often, the first step to enabling independence is simply giving people access to the right tools. And telecare is one of the smartest tools we have.

> *If you are dependent, the funding comes from central government. If you're not dependent, but you have the right to have telecare, the money comes from the local authorities like municipalities.This is a universal right in Spain, which has come about as a result of significant political will.*
>
> **Abel Delgado,** *Managing Director, Tunstall Spain*

< BACK TO INDEX

From Hospitals to the Community

Telecare can play a vital role in helping people leave hospital sooner — and, more importantly, avoid hospital admissions altogether. But to achieve this, healthcare and social care systems must work closely together, improve discharge planning, and ensure funding is used where it makes the biggest impact.

Tunstall's research shows that when telecare is used proactively, people remain independent at home for nearly nine months longer. Emergency calls drop significantly, ambulance dispatches are reduced, and annual savings of thousands of pounds per person are achieved in avoided care costs. Despite these results, proactive telecare still isn't widely used.

Why isn't Technology and Telecare used more?
There are several barriers. Many people still don't know what telecare is or how it can help. There is a stigma attached to ageing and needing support, and telecare is often seen as something only for social care — not as part of healthcare solutions. Additionally, current funding models and policy frameworks fail to reflect the full value that technology-enabled care can offer, including its potential to support unpaid carers and help people stay in work.

The Economic Pressure
Across the UK, as well as many other countries, spending on healthcare is growing — but not fast enough to keep pace with rising demand. In 2024/25, NHS funding rose by just 2.6%, below the level experts say is needed. At the same time, an ageing population is placing increasing pressure on already stretched services.

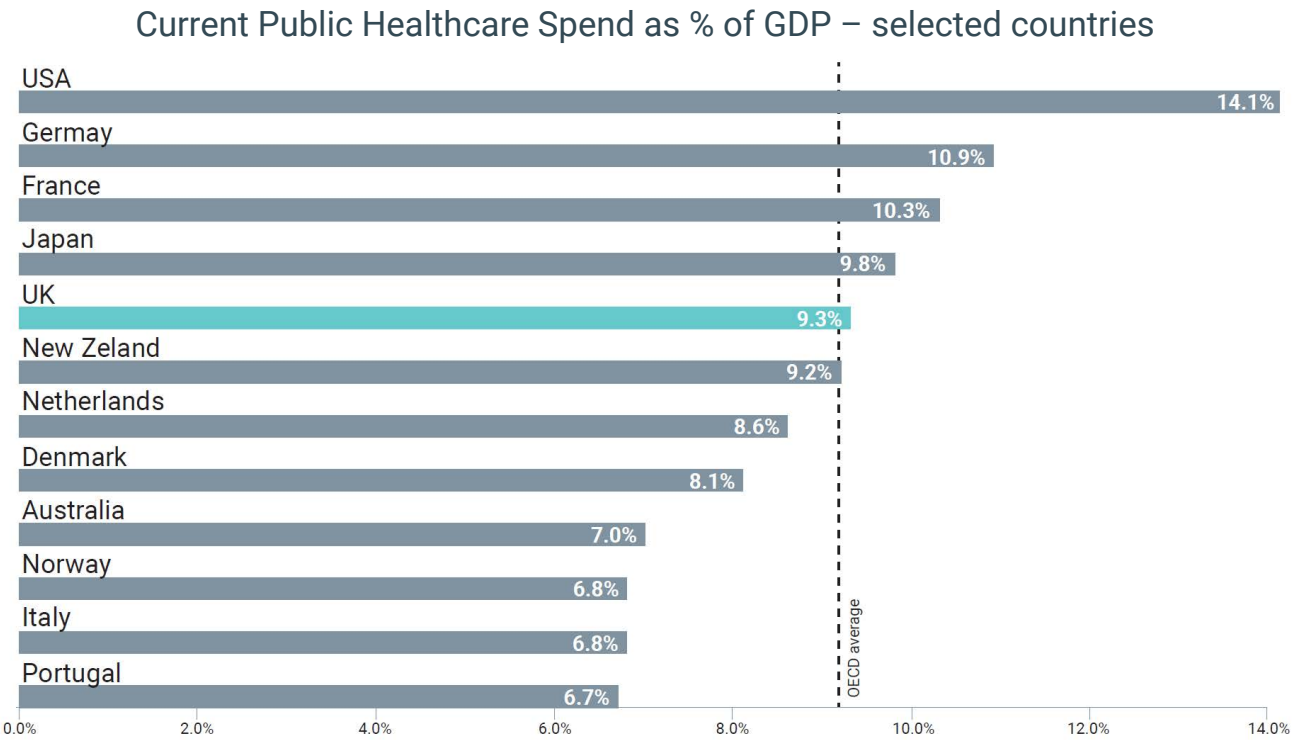
Yet, we know that technology like telecare helps reduce that pressure. It enables people to remain at home, improves quality of life, and saves money for both local councils and the NHS. The challenge is turning this potential into widespread action.

How Different Countries Are Approaching It

While healthcare systems across Europe differ, many face similar challenges. Access to services is often complex, funding responsibilities are divided, and short-term thinking prevents long-term investment in innovation.

Some countries are taking different paths:

- In Finland, health and social care funding has shifted to regional governments, with support based on individual need.
- France offers universal health insurance, with care responsibilities shared between local authorities.
- Germany's citizens pay into a public insurance scheme, which partly funds telecare alongside small personal contributions.
- Ireland uses a co-pay model, where individuals contribute to care based on their income and eligibility.
- Spain classifies people as "dependent" to access central funding, with additional support coming from regional authorities.
- In the UK, local councils manage social care funding, with strict eligibility criteria based on income and assets.



Awareness and Access Gaps

Even where funding exists, access to telecare is often limited by low public awareness. In countries like France and Germany, families are usually responsible for finding services themselves, and telecare isn't actively promoted. Cultural attitudes towards ageing and support technologies can also discourage people from seeking help.

Eligibility and the Risk of Being "Too Independent"
In many systems, people must be classified as "dependent" before they qualify for support – even if early help could delay or prevent that dependency. The challenge here is that people who could stay independent longer with the right support may not receive it in time.

The criteria and thresholds differ by country. In the UK, only people with less than £14,250 in assets get full support. In Germany and France, support is based on need, but partial funding or co-payments often apply. These differences reflect how each system defines independence, but in all cases, strict thresholds can limit access and reduce the effectiveness of preventive approaches.

Lessons from Spain
Spain offers an inspiring example. Even when national funding was reduced, many local governments continued investing in proactive telecare because they had seen its value first-hand. People stayed in their homes longer, emergency calls dropped, and healthcare costs fell. Spain's approach is now recognised as a global model for predictive and person-centred care.

Public and Private Approaches to Funding
When public systems can't meet demand, individuals often have to pay themselves. In some countries, people purchase services directly and apply for reimbursement. In others, they share costs with the government through co-payment schemes. While these models improve access, they also create a risk of a two-tiered system — where only some can afford to benefit from care innovations.

What Needs to Change
To make the most of technology and telecare, several barriers must be addressed. Funding systems need to be more joined-up, public understanding must improve, and the rules around eligibility need simplification. Telecare should be recognised as both a health and care service – and integrated accordingly.

The goal is clear: to create systems that support early action, reduce crises, and improve lives. That means funding models that reflect real outcomes, policies that support innovation, and services that people can easily access and trust.

In Summary
The global population is ageing, and healthcare systems everywhere are under pressure. But we already have the tools to help. Telecare has been proven to reduce emergency use, delay dependency, and support people to live better, safer lives at home.

What's needed now is the will to act – to remove barriers, invest wisely, and make telecare part of a modern, proactive approach to care.

From Analogue to Digital: A Global Shift in Care

Countries are fast moving from analogue to digital systems. This shift is transforming how services are delivered and opening up new possibilities for better, more proactive care.

But the pace and purpose of this change vary across regions. In the Nordic countries, for example, digital care solutions have been in place for years. In others, like the UK, the transition is a more urgent task due to the upcoming shutdown of analogue phone networks.

Regardless of the starting point, the digital journey is about much more than replacing phone lines. It's about unlocking smarter, more connected care that helps people live safely and independently for longer.

Why Digital Matters

Digital systems bring major advantages. They allow information to flow faster and more securely between care providers. They make it easier to track patterns in people's health and spot risks early. And they support tools like video calls, wearable sensors, and apps that help people manage their wellbeing at home.

In countries with ageing populations and rising demand for services, digital tools are essential to keep care affordable and effective. For example, digital platforms can reduce hospital admissions by helping care teams act earlier. They can also ease pressure on care workers by automating tasks or giving real-time alerts when someone needs help.

Global Approaches and Lessons Learned

While many countries are embracing digital change, their approaches vary. In some places, national governments provide funding and leadership – like in Spain and Australia, where central investment supports localities to buy digital equipment and reduce transition risk.

In other countries, like the Nordics, digital infrastructure and care systems are already well integrated. These regions now focus on using data and AI to make care even more personalised and predictive.

Meanwhile, in countries like the UK and Ireland, the shift is more complex. Many services still rely on analogue systems, and local councils must manage the switch-over with limited budgets. This creates short-term challenges, but also big opportunities to design services fit for the future.

Common Challenges Around the World
Even with strong digital systems in place, there are still obstacles:

- Funding gaps: Some regions lack the money to upgrade systems or train staff
- Digital inequality: People in rural areas or on low incomes may not have the same access to reliable internet or devices
- Security concerns: More data means greater responsibility to protect people's privacy and prevent cyberattacks
- Complex systems: Where care is delivered by many organisations, it can be hard to ensure everything connects smoothly

These issues affect all countries, but in different ways. That's why it's important to learn from one another, share international best practice and not to be frightened to change.

Real-World Benefits of Going Digital
Across the globe, we're seeing powerful examples of what's possible:

- In Spain, proactive digital telecare has cut emergency calls by over half (54%), and helped people stay at home nearly nine months longer.
- In Australia, central investment enabled the national rollout of digital devices to vulnerable residents, improving safety and reducing hospital pressure.
- In the Nordics, integration of health and care records allows professionals to deliver joined-up, person-centred support.

Digital tools also enable people and families to stay more informed and involved in their own care – a key part of improving outcomes and independence.

< BACK TO INDEX

What Comes Next?
Looking ahead, digital is not just about replacing what we had before – it's about building smarter, more responsive care systems. Technologies like AI, large language models, machine learning, and predictive analytics are already being used to spot problems early and personalise support.

But to make the most of this potential, countries must invest in infrastructure, ensure fair access, and support local innovation. Global collaboration will also be vital: what works in one country may inspire new approaches in another.

Why It Matters for Telecare
For telecare specifically, going digital isn't just a technical upgrade – it's a foundation for better care. It allows for more proactive and preventive support, where help is provided before a crisis happens. It makes services more reliable and flexible. And it helps connect the dots between health, social care, and daily life.

Whether you're starting from scratch or building on years of digital development, this shift is a chance to create care systems that are safer, fairer, and more effective for everyone.

< BACK TO INDEX

From Sickness to Prevention

Across the world, healthcare systems are under increasing pressure. As people live longer, often with more complex needs, services must find smarter ways to support independence and well-being. Traditional models of waiting until crises occur are no longer acceptable. We need to use our data to improve decision making, prevent things from happening in the first place and do more to keep people at home for longer.

We need to shift our focus from reacting to problems to preventing them in the first place. This approach not only improves quality of life for individuals but also helps care systems operate more efficiently. Technology plays a central role in this transformation, enabling earlier interventions, reducing emergency situations, and allowing people to stay safe and well in their own homes.

Smart Solutions That aren't widely used
Many countries are recognising the value of proactive care. Yet, despite strong evidence of the benefits, adoption is still limited. Often, this is because prevention doesn't easily fit into existing funding systems. For example, social care may bear the cost of a new service, while health services see the savings. This misalignment makes it difficult to scale up proven solutions like proactive telecare.

In one study, proactive telecare allowed people to remain at home for nearly nine months longer. Emergency calls dropped by 54%, and ambulance dispatches dropped by 36%. These outcomes not only support individuals and families but also reduce costs for hospitals and local care services. Yet, many systems continue to focus on short-term crisis response instead of long-term prevention.

Culture and Funding: The Barriers
There's also a cultural barrier. Most people want fast help when there's a crisis, which makes it hard to justify investing in support that may only show its value over time. But prevention is not about replacing emergency care – it's about reducing the number of emergencies in the first place.

Funding structures often make this even harder. A service that benefits multiple parts of the system may only be paid for by one. This discourages investment, even when the savings are clear.

Countries Leading the Way
Some countries are showing what's possible. In Spain, even after national funding was cut, many local governments kept investing in telecare because they saw its value –better outcomes for people and savings across the board. In Sweden and Finland, data and digital tools are being used to spot early warning signs and provide timely support.

These countries show that with the right systems in place, proactive care can be more efficient, more humane, and more sustainable.

Support for Families and the Economy
Preventive care isn't just good for the person receiving it, it also supports families and the economy. When someone feels safe and supported at home, their loved ones worry less – and are more likely to stay in work. In many countries, unpaid family caregiving places a big burden on households. Better support helps reduce stress and keep more people active in their jobs and communities.

System-wide Benefits
From a broader perspective, investing in prevention helps care systems cope with growing demand. It reduces the need for high-cost emergency services, delays the move to residential care, and eases pressure on hospitals. It also encourages more personalised and responsive services that focus on what people need – before they reach a crisis point.

What Needs to Change
To realise the full benefits of preventive care, we must break down the barriers between health and social care. That means aligning funding, updating policies, and making sure everyone understands what technology-enabled prevention can offer.

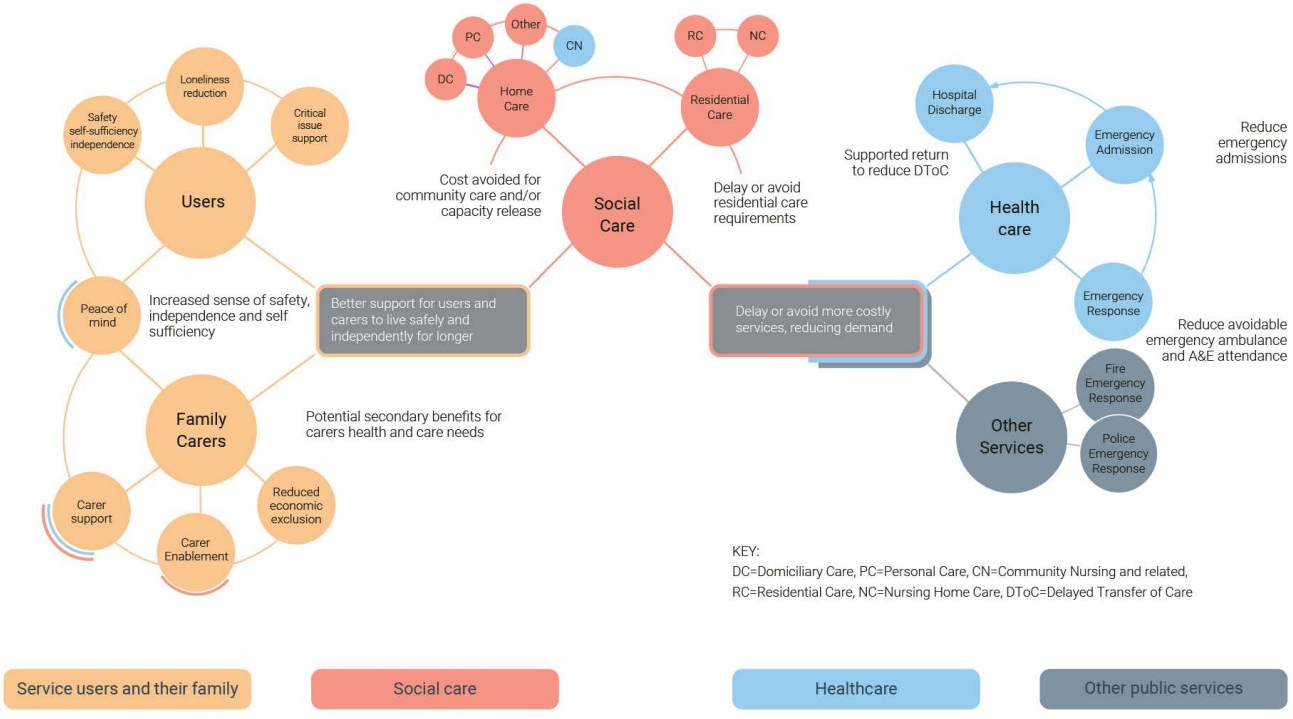
It's also about culture – helping decision-makers, professionals and the public move from a crisis mindset to one that values long-term well-being.

A Call to Action
We already have the evidence. We have the tools. And we can learn from countries that are showing the way. Now is the time to act – to invest in smarter, joined-up models that put people first and help them stay well and independent at home.

The future of care doesn't have to be reactive. It can be proactive, personalised, and built around what really matters to people.

Let's make it happen.

Telecare outcomes framework showing the benefit domains per stakeholder grouping



Conclusions

Health and care systems are under pressure the world over. Populations are ageing, and more people live with complex health needs. To meet this challenge, we need smarter ways to support people – especially older adults and vulnerable groups – so they can live independently, avoid unnecessary hospital visits, and get the right help when they need it.

One of the most powerful ways to achieve this is through better integration between health and social care services. When these systems work together, outcomes improve, duplication is reduced, and people receive more personalised support. But making this happen requires more than just good intentions– it takes funding, planning, political will, and a shared vision for change.

The Power of Integration
Integrated care systems ensure that people receive support in a more joined-up way. This improves continuity, reduces confusion, and helps providers deliver services more efficiently. In Finland, the shift to regional well-being counties is showing early benefits but also highlights how complex and demanding these reforms can be. Progress may be slow, but small steps can still lead to big improvements over time.

Meeting the Needs of an Ageing Population
The number of older adults is rising across all continents. Many live with several chronic conditions, placing growing demand on hospitals, care services and families. Integrated, person-centred care – supported by technology – can ease this pressure by helping people stay healthier at home for longer.

Telecare: A Proven Solution
Technology, especially proactive models of telecare, have shown impressive results. It can detect issues early, prevent emergencies, and delay the need for residential care. In Spain, investment in telecare has reduced hospital admissions and helped people remain independent for longer. But despite this success, many regions still underuse these tools. Fragmented systems and limited funding often block wider adoption.

< BACK TO INDEX

The Challenge of Unified Budgets
One of the main barriers to integration is funding. Health and social care services often operate under different budgets and ministries. This can make it difficult to invest in services like telecare – even when they save money in the long run. Countries are trying to bring systems closer together, though it's not easy.

Long-Term Value
Well-integrated services don't just improve care – they reduce costs. They avoid duplication, catch health problems early, and allow people to manage their care more effectively. Spain and Finland show that with good planning and political backing, integration can bring real economic and social benefits.

The Shift to Digital
Moving from analogue to digital systems is essential for the future. While the benefits are clear – such as faster response times and better data use – many countries still face challenges. Some areas lack the infrastructure, others worry about costs and cybersecurity. But digital tools are critical for delivering modern, efficient care.

Changing Public Perception
Even with strong systems, success depends on public understanding and trust. Many people still don't know what telecare is – or assume it's only for people in crisis. Breaking down stigma and raising awareness will help more people access support earlier.

Prevention is Better Than Cure
Preventive care is vital for the future of healthcare. It saves money, reduces pressure on hospitals, and improves health outcomes. Technologies like proactive telecare help spot risks early, keep people safe, and avoid costly interventions. Spain's Smarthabit programme is just one example of how well this can work in practice.

Supporting People to Live Independently
Telecare helps people live more safely at home, gives carers peace of mind, and reduces demand on health systems. Studies from Spain and the UK show clear benefits for individuals, families, and care providers. It's a win-win that helps make care more sustainable.

Final Thought: A New Path Forward
If we integrate systems, invest in digital infrastructure, and focus on prevention, we can build healthcare systems that are less reactive – and more proactive, personalised, and effective.

The tools already exist. The benefits are proven. What's needed now is action.

Telecare can and should be part of the solution. With the right support, it can help transform health and care systems globally – empowering people to live well, reducing avoidable hospital use, and ensuring services are ready for the future.

Recommendations

Telecare can help move healthcare away from crisis response and toward proactive, person-centred care. It does this by joining up services, identifying risks early, and using technology to keep people safe and independent. To succeed, we must invest faster in digital infrastructure. This will ease pressure on the healthcare system and help more people live independently and with dignity.

To unlock this potential, we must address systemic challenges and prioritise coordinated action. We recommend three key steps:

1. **Develop a national telecare strategy to solve current policy fragmentation**
   This should expand access to reactive telecare, and accelerate proactive, personalised and predictive telecare to reduce overall demand for health and social care.

   What to focus on:

   - **Integration of health and social care:** Prioritising seamless integration of telecare services with broader health and social care systems to ensure cohesive support for individuals. This includes shared goals, improved communication between providers, and unified strategies for person-centred care.
   - **Proactive and preventative models:** Increase investment in technology-driven proactive care systems to monitor and support individuals early. This can lower costs and reduce the need for emergency services and higher-cost care. These investments should be supported by evidence demonstrating long-term cost savings and improved outcomes. Policymakers should explore integrated funding models that align telecare as a shared resource between social and healthcare systems. This can facilitate cross-sectoral investment, and help ensure that telecare's economic and social benefits strengthen both systems.

2. **Explore global funding models and approaches aimed at increasing access and benefits for healthcare, individuals and carers**.

   What to focus on:

   - **Investments in proactive and predictive technologies:** Governments should prioritise funding for proactive telecare and predictive analytics to spot health issues early. Investments in these technologies can help prevent adverse events, reduce pressure healthcare, and improve quality of life for older adults.
   - **Cross-sector collaboration:** Bring together local authorities, healthcare providers, and technology developers. This would ensure that telecare solutions are designed to meet the specific needs of local populations and facilitate smoother implementation.
   - **Policy alignment for integrated care:** Establish policies that facilitate integrated care where telecare is a central component. These policies should aim to remove bureaucratic barriers between healthcare and social care budgets. This will make it easier to fund and deliver telecare solutions that benefit both systems.

3. Partner with Experienced Providers

Work with proven international experts to design proactive and predictive telecare solutions.

What to focus on:

- Building on international best practice: Policymakers should study successful models from countries that have implemented telecare effectively, such as Spain. They can use these insights to improve funding structures and service delivery. This may include adopting mixed models of public and private funding to improve access and quality.
- Utilising technology for early detection and intervention: Leverage telecare solutions that monitor behaviour patterns, identify early warning signs, and prompt timely action to prevent emergencies. Support innovation in the tech sector to develop affordable and effective solutions.
- Encouraging cultural shifts: Foster a culture of prevention and proactive care among healthcare providers, policymakers, and the public. This involves shifting perceptions from crisis management to early intervention, supporting long-term change in care delivery models.

Achieving this vision requires urgent and decisive action. Cross-sector collaboration must become standard practice, with preventative care positioned at the core of healthcare strategies. We have a unique opportunity to lead this change, leveraging telecare to create a future-ready healthcare model that is efficient, equitable, and resilient.

A global moment to act

This is a time of great challenge, but also great opportunity. Many countries are already moving toward more integrated, digital, and preventive care systems – but progress is often uneven and too slow.

Countries can improve outcomes for individuals and families by:

- Embedding telecare into national strategies.
- Aligning policies and budgets.
- Supporting innovation.

At the same time, this helps reduce pressure on overstretched services. The economic case is strong, the social case even stronger.

With the right leadership and investment, telecare can help create healthcare systems that are more resilient, more equitable, and truly built around the people they serve.

Let's make it happen.

About Tunstall

Established in the UK in 1957, Tunstall has become a global leader in the provision of care and health technology solutions. We operate in 18 countries around the world and support millions of people with our products and services.

Our Vision
A world where people have the freedom to live life to the full in a place of their choice.

Our Mission
To provide data driven, technology enabled solutions and services to improve our customers' ability to deliver new, more efficient and effective models for health and care management in the community.

© 2025 Tunstall Healthcare Ltd.

enquiries@tunstall.com | tunstall.com

Tunstall