

6

WAYS CAREGIVERS CAN FACILITATE ADOPTION AND USE OF A MEDICAL ALARM



So you've finally been able to convince your frail mother-in-law who lives alone that it's time for a medical alarm. Well that may have just been the easy part. Making sure that she wears it and presses it when she needs it may be the next challenge.

Here are some helpful tips for an easy transition to ensure the service gets used and provides the most benefit possible.



1

INVOLVE THE USER IN THE PROCESS

From inquiry calls, comparing features and benefits, deciding on the service provider, involve the end-user as much as possible throughout the process. Solicit their feedback and listen carefully. If they say they don't want anything around their neck (even though you think it's the better option for them) go with the wrist option. Identify misconceptions and unfounded fears regarding a feature or service and take the time to provide accurate information and assurance.

2

ENSURE THE USER IS COMFORTABLE WITH THE FINAL CHOICE

Now in the days of high tech and countless options, you may think getting as many bells and whistles is the best value for the money, however, they may prefer something far less flashy. The reason could be as simple as the colour, how it's worn, ease of charging or even something trivial. Still, as the caregiver, leaving the final choice to the user is important in gaining adoption. Nothing is worse than convincing them to get something you think is best only for them not to wear it and it sit on the dresser never used.

3

ASSURE THE USER THAT IT'S OK TO CHANGE THEIR MIND

Users may sometimes experience buyer's remorse; they may discover that the service did not live up to their expectations or the equipment wasn't as comfortable as they anticipated. As a caregiver, you can assure the user right from the start that it's ok to change their mind and you will be more than willing to help them change to another device or service provider. This is why it's important to sign up with service providers that have flexible cancellation and return policies.

4

ENSURE THE USER IS ABLE TO USE THE DEVICE ON THEIR OWN

It's a good idea to review the features and functions with the user again after the device has been installed for a while. If they have not had reason to press the button or use the service, they may have forgotten or become nervous of using the system. Assure them they can ask you questions anytime and encourage regular testing of the system when you visit with them in person or by phone/video.

5

TEST THE DEVICE TOGETHER

A lot of users are nervous to press their button for fear of bothering someone or having an ambulance sent when not needed. A good way to ease their fear is to test the button with them. Get the user to press their button and wait for the response center to answer over the speaker. When the call is answered, let the response center know you are both testing and they will happily reset the equipment. Testing allows the user to know what it feels like to press the button as well as experience the sounds the equipment makes and how long it takes for the response center to answer the call. Encourage them to test their system once a month (or more often if they wish). This will build their confidence and comfort level with the equipment.

6

HELP WITH SERVICE CHANGES

Help the user contact the service provider to make modifications to the device such as adjusting the volume, resetting the clock or reminders, changing the neck cord or wrist strap, etc. This is especially important if the user is anxious or has significant hearing difficulties. Doing this together can show them the ease of making changes. Let them know you are there if they need help making further adjustments.

BONUS: ADDRESSING COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

Here are a few misconceptions de-bunked.

- I will get charged if I set the system off by accident. **False.** We do not charge for false alarms.
- The ambulance is sent automatically when the button is pressed. **False.** We first try and contact the user to see what the situation is. If it's a false alarm, we reset the equipment. If they tell us they need help, we send whatever help they need. If we get no response, we try calling them over the phone. If still no response, we send a responder to see what's happening. If responder needs ambulance sent, we can do the dispatch for them.
- I will get charged for the ambulance even if I don't need it. **False.** The only way there is a charge from the ambulance is if the user is transported.