



Hertfordshire Careline and CareTech **SUPPORTING HOSPITAL DISCHARGE**

Hertfordshire Careline works in partnership with a local supported hospital discharge service, HomeFirst, and uses CareTech CareIP® Mobile equipment to support patients on their path to recuperation at home.

About HomeFirst

HomeFirst is a collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council, the East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT). HomeFirst brings together expertise from the NHS and social care services to ensure service users get the right care and support to stay at home wherever possible. HomeFirst's multi-disciplinary team includes nurses, occupational therapists, social workers and care staff.

The service consists of two elements:

- The reactive **rapid response** service where health and social care staff respond within 60 minutes to people in crisis.
- The proactive **virtual ward** which supports people who are at risk of hospital admission. This helps keep people in their home.

Working together to provide reassurance and to reduce costs

Hertfordshire Careline with its partner, Hertfordshire County Council, approached the East and North Hertfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group with a proposal to trial the use of portable assistive technology to support hospital discharges. HomeFirst staff have access to 6 CareTech CareIP® Mobile and pendant kits which they deploy to provide added reassurance to high-risk patients. This equipment has been well received by patients and support workers alike and has helped to support earlier hospital discharges and also reduced re-admissions.

How does it work?

Vulnerable patients are provided with a CareTech CareIP® Mobile unit at the point of discharge from a hospital ward. HomeFirst's clinicians have been fully trained to install, test, and demonstrate the CareIP® Mobile unit to patients - this plug-and-play technology enables the patient to summons help should they feel unwell or troubled. The monitoring and response to activations is undertaken by Hertfordshire Careline's 24/7 locally based Control Centre.

Once the patient is no longer in need of the support provided by the CareTech CareIP® Mobile unit, it is reassigned – but the patient has the option to become a permanent service user if they so wish. Many do as they value the reassurance offered by assistive technology.

National Awards recognition

Hertfordshire County Council and HomeFirst were winners in the Local Government Chronicle Awards 2015, with Herts Careline achieving a Finalist place. Herts Careline has also been Commended in the Municipal Journal Awards 2016.

