

Making life easier – Socialising and communication

For many of us, being independent also means being able to stay connected with family and friends, continuing to do the things we enjoy, and for some, trying new things. Sometimes, though we may find that traditional equipment makes this difficult for us to do. Thankfully, TEC (Technology Enabled Care) can help by offering a range of devices such as easy-to-use telephones and mobile phones, or simple solutions that allow you to call for help or communicate face-to-face with people over a video-call.

Technology Enabled Care can help support you to utilise technology you may already have or wish to purchase yourself to stay engaged, stay connected with others and do the things you enjoy, all of which are important for your wellbeing.

Landline and mobile telephones



Most telephones can be pre-programmed with numbers that you need to call often, such as family, friends, or the GP (General Practice). Adapted phones make it even easier for you to call the right person, by providing larger buttons, or buttons with the person's photo on it. Most smartphones also have this option but use a touch screen instead. Some phones also only allow you to call numbers that have been pre-programmed into them, or block calls from numbers that you do not know.

Video calling



Video calling or video chat is a wonderful way for people to stay connected with each other, particularly if family and friends are not local. Video calling allows you to see each other in real-time, providing reassurance to your loved ones that you are well, and allowing you to see and interact with them "in-person." To be able to make a video call you will normally need to use a device such as a smartphone, computer, or tablet, although other devices, such as the Amazon Alexa Show or Google Nest Hub can also be used. Video calling can be particularly useful for people who are deaf or speech impaired, who can use them with sign language, or for those who might be feeling isolated.

Smartphone applications (apps)

There are several applications (apps) on smartphones and tablets that you can use to help you continue doing the things you enjoy. For example, apps can help you listen to music, video call friends or family, or provide you with games and activities to help with memory loss or mental stimulation. Some game and puzzle apps also allow you to play with another person remotely, so they can be an effective way to stay connected as well as enjoy the game. Other apps can also help you to set-up reminders or alerts or be used to stay connected with family and friends through social media.

Social media



Although you may have heard a lot of terrible things about using social media, if used safely and appropriately, social media can be an effective way for you to stay connected with family, friends, and other like-minded people. It can help you to feel less isolated and lonely and more independent, but you should always be aware that some people may not be who they claim to be, and you should never disclose any personal information.

Many social media channels allow you to upload and share photos, so it can be an effective way of keeping up to date with things that are important to you, such as seeing how the various places people have visited on holiday or how much your grandchildren have grown.

Social media can also provide a way for you to access diverse groups such as personal support networks, meal sharing initiatives, or local community groups that may be of interest to you, all from the comfort of your own home.