

Emergency Response Systems

When someone is frail, unsteady on their feet or experiencing memory or thinking problems, we often worry when they are alone at home. There are steps between being alone at home and having a constant companion.

One of these options is an emergency response system. These systems, frequently advertised by "I've fallen and I can't get up" allow a person to wear a bracelet or necklace with a button to push for assistance. This button connects wirelessly to a receiver somewhere in the home that alerts the central dispatch. This receiver is usually connected by a telephone line. Some recent improvements have added wireless cell phone connection to the central dispatch. The person at dispatch communicates with the wearer, asking if s/he needs help.

When help IS required, or the wearer does not respond to the dispatch's question, the dispatch calls the person's primary responder. That primary responder is identified at the time the system is set up. It may be a family member or a next door neighbor, or local 911. If that primary responder is unavailable, the dispatch calls the backup responder. If this fails as well, the local 911 will be called.

An additional system for someone who may wander is available from the Alzheimer's Association. It is a Medic Alert/Safe Return bracelet. If an individual with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia wanders and becomes lost, caregivers can call the 24/7 emergency response line to report it. A community support network will be activated. If a citizen or emergency personnel find the individual with Alzheimer's, they can call the toll free number on the bracelet and the Medic Alert/Safe Return staff will facilitate the person's return home.

Some local Emergency Response Programs are listed on the reverse side of this sheet.

**You can contact a Resource Specialist at
SMAA at 1-800-427-7411 for more information**

There are varying monthly costs and installation fees for the programs. There are also varying levels of remote connectivity and technical sophistication for all the programs. Call and speak to a few providers to get an idea of what they offer and what things will cost.

New England Emergency Response System: Lifeline

Phone: (800)888-0338

Website: www.neers.com

Home Health Visiting Nurses: Lifeline

Phone: (800)660-4867

Website: www.homehealth.org

ABG Lifesaver Medical Alarms

Phone: (877)718-7377

Website: www.agbmedalarms.com

VNA LifeLine Program

Phone: (800)757-3326

Website: www.mercyhospital.org

Alzheimer's Safe Return + Medic Alert Program

Phone: (800)272-3900

Website: www.alz.org/safetycenter