**Case Study: Locala Community Partnerships**

**Supporting healthcare staff working in the community**

**​**

Leading Community Interest Company, Locala, has selected Safe Hub from Lone Worker Solutions to support staff who work alone or out of direct contact with line managers. The group’s 1,300 staff provide community-based health services across Kirklees, Calderdale and Bradford.

*“This is our first lone working protection system, and it was essential that we chose the right solution the first time. The team at Lone Worker Solutions have demonstrated their partnership credentials by being flexible and helping us to reach the right decision regarding features and devices. This has given us the peace of mind that Safe Hub will support our staff in the real-world situations they may face” Suzanne Flintoff, Locala Community Partnerships.*

Locala’s mandate is to provide NHS community-based services that bridge health provision between hospitals and GP surgeries. Approximately half of Locala’s team are lone workers, i.e. staff working alone or with a colleague, but out of direct contact with supervisors or line managers.

Healthcare in the community

Locala’s healthcare provision includes a wide range of services; from Health Visiting to Speech and Language Therapy, Substance Misuse Teams to Sexual Health; Community Nursing and Podiatry. These services are delivered at health centres, GP surgeries, schools, in the community and service-users’ own homes by Locala staff. Staff members often work directly with service-users who have complex needs, can be vulnerable or are in challenging environments.

Sexual Health Outreach services

One complex area of Locala’s work is the provision of sexual health outreach. For example, staff provide support around sexual health and promote safer sex awareness in schools, colleagues and community venues. The team also work directly with higher risk groups in the community. Sex workers are supported on-site in locations such as massage parlours, brothels and on the streets. In these areas, drug and alcohol use may exacerbate already challenging circumstances. In such scenarios, Locala’s staff always work with at least one other colleague, but there are instances where staff are nevertheless out of touch with their supervisors or colleagues at their base locations.

Children’s services

Less obviously challenging perhaps, staff can still face risks when providing children’s services in schools. Many schools offer facilities that can be accessed by students discreetly; perhaps in a less used area of the school campus. In these areas, lone workers can be dealing with complex needs and can face confrontational behaviour.

Health Visitors and Community Nurses

Health Visitors and Community Nurses often work alone, apart from an initial risk assessment at the service-users’ home. All staff have attended mandatory training for lone worker safety, and this enables them to assess risks and mitigate against them. Safe Hub is one of the tools at their disposal, but the aim is to reduce risk where feasible before a situation escalates. Staff know not to take an additional risk because of their safety device.

Locala has deployed SOS Fob for most of its lone workers. “Many of our staff will be carrying or using specialist equipment. So, they particularly value being able to wear the SOS Fob using an armband or moulded badge; each suit different workers. Wearing SOS Fob means it doesn’t interfere with their clothing or any specialist equipment, it’s discreet, lightweight, and most importantly, always to hand in a crisis” Suzanne Flintoff, Locala Community Partnerships.

SOS Fob is a BS8484:2016 Gold Certified specialist lone working device. It deploys two key technologies. Global Positioning System (GPS) to locate your lone worker in an emergency. And Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM), which allows workers to speak directly to operatives at the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC).

SOS Fob Key features:

Red Alert – High-quality two-way audio voice call to the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC). Activation is discreet via the prominent central SOS button. The ARC can access GPS location, personal escalation protocols and can direct emergency service to the worker’s location.

Yellow Alert – Voice memo allows lone workers to leave a recorded message providing task- or location-specific information; this can save valuable time if the worker than initiates a Red Alert.

Worker Down – Fall and impact detection alert. Alert sensitivity can be customised up or down on individual devices or even deactivated entirely to provide the best fit for every lone worker.

GPS location – Reported to the system every ten minutes, and whenever a Red, Yellow or Worker Down Alert is raised. The GPS location is captured within Safe Hub in real-time and used by the ARC operator to direct emergency services to the worker’s position in an emergency.

Buddy feature gives peace-of-mind

Staff across departments were drawn to the ‘buddy’ features of Safe Hub Red Alert. Users can press the SOS button and will be immediately connected to the Alarm Receiving Centre. The ARC operative will stay on the call with a worker, should they feel at risk. For example, if they’re working late at night and are uncomfortable in a poorly lit car park, ARC staff can stay alert as they walk to their vehicle. The ARC staff use the initial seconds of the call for active listening if a vulnerable worker can’t speak freely. All calls are recorded, and these recordings are admissible as evidence in a court of law.

Occasional lone workers

Some of Locala’s staff only work alone occasionally and may be called out unexpectedly so they can’t always plan to have a fully charged specialist device with them. For these staff the challenge was choosing a solution that would always be to hand, fully charged and never forgotten. Enter the Safe Hub App for smartphones. Safe Hub’s advanced smartphone app includes all our features: Red Alert, Yellow Alert, Safe Check, Worker Down, Group Alert and Safe Beacon. Designed to work seamlessly across all handsets, the app is available for Android, Apple and Windows smartphones (as well as BlackBerry handsets, standard mobiles and PCs).

About Lone Worker Solutions

At Lone Worker Solutions, it’s our business to protect employees, managers and shareholders from the risks associated with working alone. This includes the potential hazards faced by staff who work by themselves, remotely, or out-of-sight or earshot of colleagues. When it comes to safety we don't believe in a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach; instead, we tailor our solution to each organisation's exact needs.

About Safe Hub

Safe Hub is an award-winning package of emergency, buddy, proactive, reactive, broadcast and virtual barrier protection for lone workers. Safe Hub supports lone and remote workers on the widest possible array of BS8484:2016 Gold Certified devices, including Android, Apple and Windows smartphones, BlackBerrys, standard mobiles, PCs, intrinsically safe devices, specialist personal safety devices and satellite phones.