

# Personal alarms linked to family

## A guide



Health & Social Care Moray

# Introduction

Personal alarms are small, wearable devices that let people call for help if they need it, for example after a fall at home.

They connect either directly to chosen family members and friends only or, in some cases, to a specialist alarm receiving centre run by a provider you choose.

Personal alarms provide a practical way to alert someone in an emergency, helping you maintain independence and offering peace of mind for both you and your loved ones.

More people are deciding to buy their own personal alarm or use devices they and their family are already familiar with. There are many options on the market, offering a variety of features and flexibility to meet different needs.

Devices usually require a mobile signal, internet connection or the use of an app – a type of program you download to your smartphone or tablet. Some also require ongoing subscription charges.

It's worth exploring the range of products available and thinking about what will best support your independence and peace of mind.

## Things to think about before you buy

If you're thinking about buying your own alarm or device, here are some helpful tips:

### **Decide what you need**

- What do you want the alarm or device to do? (e.g. detect falls, alert someone when you're unwell, remind you to take medication)

### **Make sure it's future proof**

- Only choose devices that are digital-ready (and will work after the national digital switchover).
- Avoid devices that rely only on older, analogue phone lines.

### **Buy wisely**

- Look for a guarantee and a clear returns policy.
- Read customer reviews to learn from other people's experiences.
- Compare prices and shop around – different suppliers offer different features and deals.
- Don't be pressured into making a purchase.

### **For carers**

- If you care for someone else, make sure they feel confident and comfortable using the device. Simpler designs or voice-activated features may be more suitable for some people.

# Finding products

There are websites and online retailers or marketplaces that provide information and sell a range of technology products and services.

Specific products and services can also be found through individual providers. Online platforms offering advice, information and useful product reviews and comparisons include:

## **NHS**

<https://www.nhs.uk/social-care-and-support/care-services-equipment-and-care-homes/personal-alarms-security-systems-and-keysafes/>

## **Living Made Easy**

<https://livingmadeeeasy.org.uk/>

## **AskSARA**

<https://asksara.livingmadeeeasy.org.uk/selector>

## **Independent Living**

<https://www.independentliving.co.uk/>

## **Which?**

<https://www.which.co.uk/>

## **Age Space**

Age Space is a one-stop online resource and guide which includes a comprehensive assessment of personal alarms based on reviews by a panel of testers aged over 70. Key features for each product are detailed and ratings for customer service and value for money/price are included.

<https://www.agespace.org>

# Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is not exhaustive and is meant as a guide only.

Health & Social Care Moray is not affiliated with any of the device providers mentioned here, nor have they tested or used any of the products.

It is therefore important that you undertake your own research, based on your individual circumstances, before committing to purchase.

# SuresafeGO



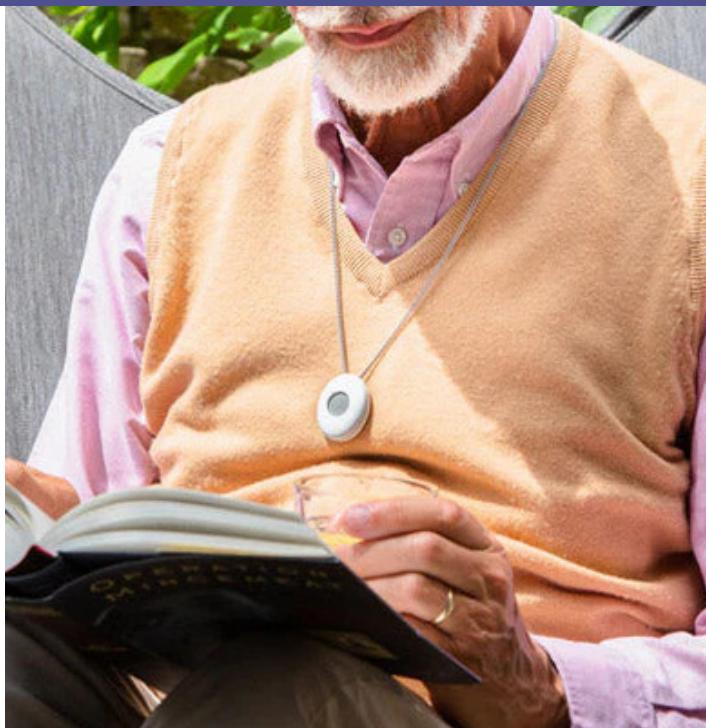
Product name/service	<b>SuresafeGO</b>
Type of monitoring	Links to family and friends
Wearable option	Watch or pendant
In-built features include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Automatic fall detection</li><li>Speak directly through the alarm device</li><li>GPS location tracker</li><li>View geo-fences – a virtual perimeter around a house or neighbourhood</li><li>Chat feature</li><li>Activity notifications</li></ul>
Range/coverage	Mobile – wear anywhere – home or out and about

# Companion Personal Alarm Watch



Product name/service	<b>Companion Personal Alarm Watch</b>
Type of monitoring	Family monitored alarm linked to mobile phone app and website
Wearable option	Works and looks just like a normal watch
In-built features include	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk directly through the watch</li><li>• Automatic fall detection</li><li>• GPS tracking</li><li>• Heart rate monitor</li><li>• Activity monitoring</li></ul>
Range/coverage	Mobile – wear anywhere

# Age Co Digital Personal Alarm



Product name/service	<b>Age Co Digital Personal Alarm</b>
Type of monitoring	UK-based 24-hour monitoring
Wearable option	Neck pendant or wrist strap
In-built features include	Press the button on the Digital Personal Alarm pendant to get help from Taking Care's Emergency Resolution team in any emergency. The Emergency Resolution team will call family, friends, or neighbours who you have nominated as your emergency contacts if you need help. No charging requirement. Five-year pendant battery life.
Range/coverage	300m/948 feet from base unit. Range can be reduced depending on the size of your home and garden, and by things like the thickness of the walls.

# Age Co Digital Fall Alarm



Product name/service	<b>Age Co Digital Fall Alarm</b>
Type of monitoring	UK-based 24-hour monitoring. Like many similar devices on the market, it cannot guarantee to detect all falls because it is dependent on where it is worn and the amount of shock or impact from the fall. If you fall and can press the emergency button, then you should do so.
Wearable option	Neck pendant or wrist strap
In-built features include	All the benefits of an in-home personal alarm with in-built fall sensor included. If you are worried about how you will get help if you fall, this alarm provides peace of mind and security in the home and garden.
Range/coverage	300m/948 feet from base unit. Range can be reduced depending on the size of your home and garden, and by things like the thickness of the walls.

# Age Co Taking Care Anywhere



Product name/service	<b>Age Co Taking Care Anywhere</b>
Type of monitoring	UK-based 24-hour monitoring. Like many similar devices on the market, it cannot guarantee to detect all falls because it is dependent on where it is worn and the amount of shock or impact from the fall. If you fall and can press the emergency button, then you should do so.
Wearable option	Neck pendant/keyring or on belt
In-built features include	A GPS-tracked personal alarm with fall detection that works whether you're at home or out and about. If you enjoy being out of the house but want some reassurance you can call for help in an emergency, this could suit your active lifestyle. Up to two months pendant battery life.
Range/coverage	Anywhere in the UK (subject to GPS satellite network availability)

# Age Co Personal Alarm Watch

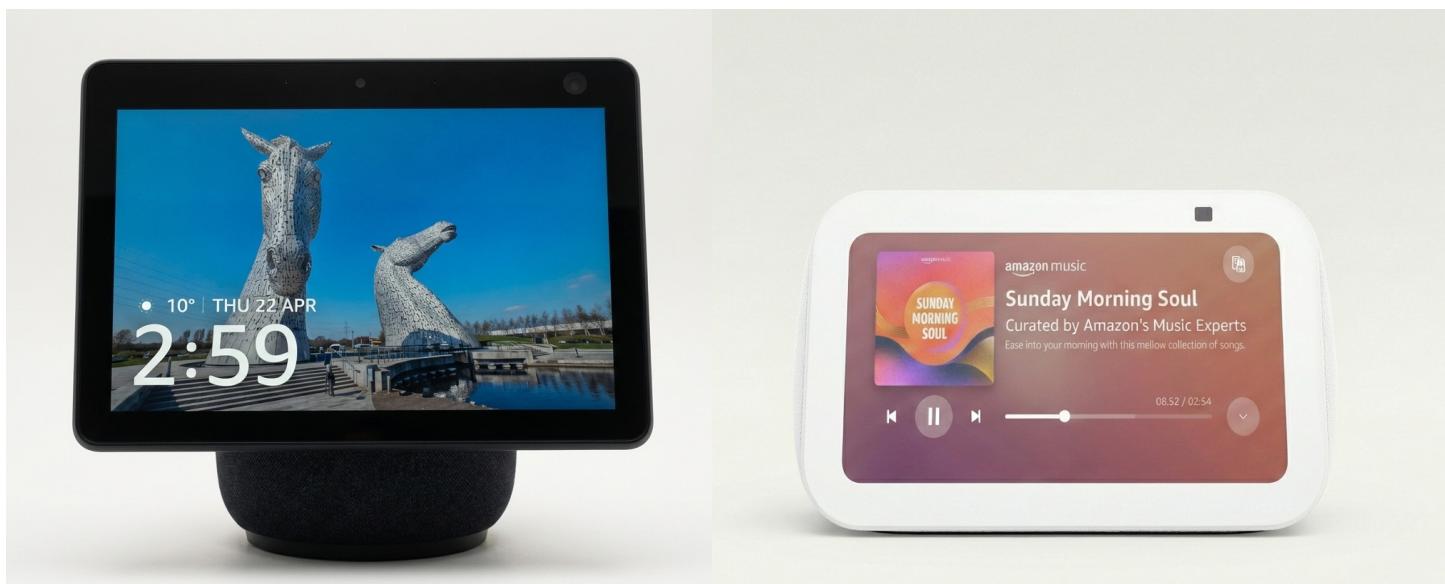


Product name/service	<b>Age Co Personal Alarm Watch</b>
Type of monitoring	UK-based 24-hour monitoring
Wearable option	Wrist strap
In-built features include	A stylish GPS watch with in-built personal alarm that works whether you're home or out and about. An option if you want a personal alarm that works out-and-about and doesn't look like an alarm pendant or wrist-worn alarm button. Up to 48 hours battery life.
Range/coverage	Anywhere in the UK (subject to GPS satellite network availability)

# Amazon Alexa, Echo Dot, and Echo Frame



Product name/service	<b>Amazon Alexa, Echo Dot, and Echo Frame</b>
Type of monitoring	Subscription to Alexa Emergency Contact required. Voice activated. Calls and texts your assigned emergency contacts.
Wearable option	No
In-built features include	Attempts to call and text your emergency contact when you give voice commands like: "Call for help" or "I need help"
Range/coverage	Works with existing Alexa devices in your home. Wi-fi connection needed.
Note	This service is not a substitute for emergency response services or 999.



# Epilepsy sensors – wearables

Epilepsy alarms UK ([www.epilepsyalarms.co.uk](http://www.epilepsyalarms.co.uk)) provides useful information about wearable epilepsy alarms that detect the onset of tonic-clonic seizures. When the onset is detected, an alert is sent direct to a caregiver's mobile 'phone via an app and includes the location of the person wearing the sensor.

The website also provides information about easy-payment options and organisations that can provide assistance through funding, subject to eligibility criteria.



## Epi-Care mobile (Danish Care Technology)

Is another wearable that is provided with a mobile 'phone with all software pre-installed. The user is responsible for providing and maintaining a SIM card. Further information can be found at: <https://danishcare.co.uk/epicare-mobile>

# Help with costs

If you, or the person you are buying the alarm for, have a condition that requires regular medication, are chronically sick or are registered disabled then you may qualify for VAT exemption.

You can find more information on the **Government website:**  
<https://www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/vat-relief>

Depending on your circumstances, you might be able to get some financial help towards buying equipment. A number of charities, condition-specific organisations and carer support groups offer grants or allowances that could reduce the cost.

Every scheme has different rules about who qualifies, so it's worth spending a little time checking what's available and whether it fits your situation.

**Some websites you might find useful include:**

**Disability Information Scotland**

<https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/info-guide/grants-and-support/#overview>

**Carers UK**

<https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/financial-support/benefits-if-you-are-disabled-ill-or-injured/grants-and-schemes/>

**Alzheimer's Society**

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/living-with-dementia/grants-help-person-dementia-equipment-home>

**For further information about this document or to request it in another format or language, please contact:**

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