

## Remote Support: Frequently Asked Questions

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**USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE A PERSON’S HEALTH AND SAFETY CAN GENERATE BOTH INTEREST AND CONCERN. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS MAY HELP YOUR TEAM BETTER UNDERSTAND REMOTE MONITORING SUPPORT.**

## Remote support 101

### What is remote support/monitoring?

Remote support is a waiver service that uses different technologies and equipment to ensure a person’s health and welfare at a distance. Usually, remote support means that a remote caregiver is assigned to help a person who needs reminders, assistance, or reassurance. A remote caregiver can also monitor vitals, ensure that the environment is safe, and, if needed, reach out to emergency response teams. Remote support can provide a discreet yet safe and reliable solution for many day-to-day needs, including:

- Verbal reminders for scheduling activities and routine, self-administered medication
- Assistance with safety skills, visitors, and outings using cameras and/or sensors
- Monitoring vitals, seizures, or sleep apnea using pressure pads and movement detectors
- Monitoring/shutting off an appliance after use
- Two-way talk/video chat for reassurance and reinforcing safety skills

The rule in the Ohio Revised Code defines remote support as:

“[...] the monitoring of an individual in his or her residence by staff using one or more of the following systems: live video feed, live audio feed, motion sensing system, radio frequency identification, web-based monitoring system, or other device that meets the requirements set forth in this rule. The system shall include devices to engage in live two-way communication with the individual being monitored as described in the individual service plan.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 5123:2-9-35 Home and community-based services waivers - remote monitoring and remote monitoring equipment under the individual options, level one, and self-empowered life funding waivers.

## What kind of equipment can the team use?

Technological advances make it impossible to capture all the possibilities - from door sensors and movement based alert systems to cameras and two-way devices, the list of possibilities grows every day. We encourage individuals and teams to contact their SSA and certified vendors to find a solution tailored to their specific needs.

## Technological and technical concerns

### What happens if the power goes out?

Some of the systems currently used are equipped with a 24-hour battery backup. For most of the vendors, the monitoring centers have generators and cellular internet services that will sustain remote support services while the issue is being resolved.

The person's team should outline a protocol and include its details in the My Plan packet (ISP packet).

### How will we know if a device is malfunctioning?

Some devices are equipped with tamper and offline notifications, which will alert the monitoring team/vendor. Depending on the vendor, a support team is available to resolve issues and maintain expected monitoring.

### Who pays for the internet/wireless connection?

Depending on the remote monitoring vendor, the cost related to the Internet and/or WI-FI may be paid by the individual or the vendor. This concern may constitute a good starting point when in the process of choosing a vendor.

## What if the individual damages the equipment?

In most instances, the main piece of equipment is housed in a locked container or concealed in a piece of furniture. The equipment that is exposed is professionally installed with outlet locks and cord channels, limiting accidental or intentional damaging.

## Privacy and Rights

### Who has control over the person monitoring? Qualifications, gender, etc.

Vendors make sustained efforts to respect an individual's preference of remote caregiver while also maintaining the integrity of the service. Remote caregivers are trained and respect required qualifications as outlined in ORC 5123:2-9-35.

### How much information does the person monitoring have?

The remote caregiver has access to the information deemed necessary to ensure health and safety, as determined by the individual and his or her team. This could mean having access to the My Plan and related documents (Assessment tool, discovery tool) as well as any protocols written by the team to be used in case of emergency.

### Where is the data stored?

In general, vendors have their own policies regarding the storage of video footage and it could range from a few days to a few weeks. If the recorded video footage is related to an incident (UI or MUI), it will be kept for 7 years and made available to the investigative team. We encourage teams to discuss this matter with the vendors in order to determine what is best for the individual.

## Response Time, safety skills, and emergencies

### Is there a specific protocol for emergencies?

Based on a person-centered approach, the team will determine a protocol that will ensure health and safety, especially in case of an emergency. In addition, the remote monitoring caregiver will not hesitate to contact emergency services in case of observable emergencies (fire, natural catastrophe).

### Who can let emergency personnel into the residence?

There are several solutions to this concern and the best option for a specific individual should be discussed with the team. Some examples of successful strategies include:

- Installing a lockbox near the front door to house an extra key
- Installing a keyless/electronic door locking system

In both instances, the remote monitoring/supports team could communicate the codes to the emergency response team so that they can gain access to the property rapidly.

### If someone leaves home, how do you find them without being able to follow directly?

If there is a concern pertaining the health and safety of a loved one when leaving their home a GPS type device can be installed on a cellular phone or on a keychain to help the team in locating a loved one.

## How can we help a person leave their apartment in case of emergency?

Most of the technology used in remote monitoring permits two-way communication, meaning that a remote caregiver can give the person instructions and cues on what to do and where to go during an emergency situation. If the team deems it necessary, additional technology such as sirens and strobes can be installed in the apartment.

## Can remote support be tested to determine if it is a good match for me/my loved one?

Most providers will agree to a trial period that will determine the best option for an individual and/or that person's team. Some technologies and equipment can be hard to describe and teams are encouraged to ask for demonstrations and visits if needed.

## What if I feel lonely or get scared?

Remote caregivers can usually be accessed 24/7 if needed. Two-way communication, a phone call or text messages can be used in those instances. From experience, remote monitoring vendors have seen served individuals being motivated to get out of their home to build relationships instead of connecting with paid supports.

## Backup, what is it?

Backup is the person or agency who agrees to respond in-person should the individual need in-person support during remote support hours. The backup would not be expected to respond in emergencies; the remote support vendor will contact emergency personnel in the event of an emergency. The team will discuss the time frame for arriving in person that makes most sense for the person.

## Do we have to have backup?

Yes, backup is an essential component of the remote support service.

## How do we select paid or unpaid backup?

This is really a team decision and is based upon that person's needs. If the person lives down the street from a family member who is willing to provide backup, then unpaid backup might make sense. If having family act as backup is not feasible, then seeing if their HPC agency will provide paid backup might be the best fit.

## What if a person doesn't have "alone time"?

When remote support is in place, there is a designated staff person monitoring the person in real-time. So even though staff isn't sitting in the person's apartment with them, they are being monitored. Because of this, when being monitored remotely, the person is not considered alone.

## Do I pick the vendor or does my HPC provider?

Ultimately, you are in complete control of the vendor you use. Some HPC agencies have agreements already formed with vendors. Generally, when this is the case, this helps the discussions and installations go seamlessly; that said, if you would like to use a different vendor, this is your prerogative.

I don't feel comfortable going to remote support seven nights a week. Can I ease into it?

Yes! You can start with as little as one hour at a time. Some people will start with some daytime monitoring and will then ease into overnight; others will start just one night at a time and slowly work up. Talk with your SSA and team about what makes you feel most comfortable.