



# Media release

25 February 2018

## NBN Co to provide enhanced support for medical alarm users

### New trial to assist with the cost of updating unmonitored medical alarms when connecting to the nbn™ broadband access network

Owners of unmonitored medical alarms (autodialling devices) are set to receive further assistance during their household's migration to services over the nbn™ broadband access network, following enhancements to NBN Co's support for medical alarm users.

The company is planning to commence a new trial with participating providers to assist users of unmonitored medical alarms with the cost of moving their alarm when migrating their services to the nbn™ access network.

Over the next few months, NBN Co will work with leading manufacturers and a trial group of up to 400 medical alarms users in order to refine its processes before announcing full details of a new assistance program.

The trial will assist NBN Co to refine details including identifying specific alarm suppliers and devices eligible to participate in the scheme and confirming the eligibility criteria for participants.

In addition, representatives from NBN Co will now call people who are registered on its Medical Alarm Register (MAR) once they are able to connect to the nbn™ access network and guide them through the steps they need to know about their device.

#### **Brad Whitcomb, NBN Co's Chief Customer Officer - Residential said:**

"We are committed to working with the healthcare industry as well as phone and internet service providers, to help ensure users of medical alarms are aware of what they need to do to switch to services over the nbn™ access network.

"With approximately 180,000 Australians already registered on our Medical Alarm Register, we take our role in supporting all members of our community very seriously and want to help ensure these people are provided with the necessary information and assistance they need.

"Our trial will help us better understand the systems and processes needed to work with medical alarm providers and end-users to deliver the new assistance program.

"We are urging everyone who has a medical alarm device - or family members, carers and friends of those people - to add their details to our Medical Alarm Register so one of our team members can reach out to provide them with assistance and guidance about how to find out if their existing alarms will be compatible with the nbn™ access network.



"It's important for these residents to understand that the move to services over the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> access network is not automatic and it may take some planning and preparation."

The announcement comes as a reminder for homes and businesses in areas that can currently connect to the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> access network to speak with a phone and internet provider about moving over any affected landline, internet and alarm services prior to the decommissioning of the existing fixed line network. Once an area is declared 'ready to connect' to the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> access network, residents and businesses generally have 18-months to choose a new nbn-powered plan and make the switch.\*

To date more than 3.5 million homes and businesses have activated services over the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> access network and a further 2.75 million homes and businesses are ready to connect.

Visit the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> website to learn more about medical alarms or registering your information on the Medical Alarm Register or by calling 1800 227 300 from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

NBN Co will announce more details about how people can apply to participate once we complete the trial and launch the full program in the second half of 2018.

**ENDS**

## Media enquiries

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## Resources

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Notes to editor:

- NBN Co's Medical Alarm Register was established in 2014 to help support people who have medical alarm devices migrate their household successfully across to services provided over the **nbn**<sup>TM</sup> access network.
- Unmonitored medical alarms or emergency diallers are personal emergency alarms that can be programmed to contact family or friends and facilitate a voice phone call through the alarm itself when the alarm user presses an emergency help button.



- The rollout of the **nbn**<sup>™</sup> broadband access network will involve new technologies, and some existing devices (including many medical alarms, autodiallers and emergency call buttons) may not be compatible with these at all times. You should contact your device provider to find out if your alarm or other device will work when connected to the nbn<sup>™</sup> broadband access network and what alternative solutions are available. For more information, visit [nbn.com.au/compatibility](http://nbn.com.au/compatibility). Equipment connected over the nbn<sup>™</sup> network will not work during a power blackout. Consider having an alternate form of communication handy (such as a charged mobile phone). However, it is important to remember that any communication network can experience unexpected outages. Unmonitored medical alarms are not life saving devices and may not work in a power outage if the mobile network is not available, or if the alarm user has installed the SIM card incorrectly or not kept the mobile service account paid and active.
- The trial group consists of medical alarm users selected from existing customers of the participating unmonitored medical alarm providers, are registered on the Medical Alarm Register and who are in an nbn ready area.
- Services provided over the nbn<sup>™</sup> broadband access network will be replacing phone and internet services provided over most of the existing landline networks, including copper and the majority of HFC networks within the fixed line footprint. Services provided over existing fibre networks (including in-building, health and education networks) and some special and business services may not be affected. To find out if your services will be affected, please contact your current phone or internet provider. For more information, visit [nbn.com.au/switch-off](http://nbn.com.au/switch-off) or call 1800 687 626.