



Media release

NBN Co offers support to upgrade unmonitored medical alarms at a reduced cost

Up to 80 per cent of the cost of upgrading unmonitored medical alarms to be met by NBN Co

NBN Co will provide additional support for unmonitored medical alarm users to help improve their experience when they migrate to the **nbn**[™] access network.

As part of a nationwide upgrade of Australian telecommunications, services over the **nbn**[™] access network are scheduled to progressively replace most existing fixed-line phone and internet services. This means people may need to upgrade their unmonitored medical alarm so it continues to be able to dial out in the event of a power outage.

An unmonitored medical alarm calls a family member, friend, neighbour or 000 when triggered. It differs from a monitored alarm, which calls an alarm-monitoring centre that may have a monthly fee, or a locally monitored alarm, which calls the staff at an aged care or retirement facility.

The new network requires power to operate and in the case of an outage, some unmonitored medical alarms that rely on a home phone line may not work as they will be unable to call a family member, friend or 000 when triggered.

Under the 'Unmonitored Medical Alarm Upgrade Offer', eligible¹ people can obtain an upgraded medical alarm at a discounted price of up to of 80 per cent² off the normal price – to a maximum of \$300 off, from participating alarm suppliers.

As a first step, owners (or carers on their behalf) should make sure their unmonitored medical alarms are registered in NBN Co's Medical Alarm Register. NBN Co will contact registered medical alarm users when their home is ready to be connected to the network. They will get advice about potential compatibility issues with their unmonitored medical alarm and their options to upgrade, or speak to their existing alarm supplier about continuing to use their existing alarm, before their current phone service is switched off.

The advice will also be distributed in other channels including medical alarm support services, thousands of GP waiting areas and through selected aged care community groups.

To check if you, your family member or friend is eligible for the 'Unmonitored Medical Alarm Upgrade Offer', or to find out more about the offer, please visit nbn.com.au/alarmupgrade or call 1800 003 095.

NBN Co's Chief Customer Officer – Residential, Brad Whitcomb said:

"It's important to remember the move to the **nbn**[™] access network is not automatic – Australians will need to take action to migrate services such as medical alarms over to the new network.

"We're encouraging all users of unmonitored medical alarms, or family or friends of those with an alarm, to register their details on our Medical Alarm Register so they can be provided assistance with their household's migration, and also understand if they are eligible for up to an 80 per cent discount on upgrading a new alarm.



“Even if you are unsure, submit your details to our register and we will advise you on what support is available.

“In the coming weeks, we will be launching a national awareness campaign targeted specifically at unmonitored medical alarm users. Communication will be mailed directly to people on our register and will also be distributed in other channels including medical alarm support services, thousands of GP waiting areas and through selected aged care community groups.”

President of the Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association, Nan Bosler said:

“Many older Australians are not aware that the rollout of the **nbn™** access network may impact their unmonitored medical alarms. There are easy step-by-step directions on the [NBN Co website](#) so you can register for additional support in order to help you have a smooth migration to the network.”

The **nbn™** access network is scheduled to replace existing landline and internet services for almost 600,000 homes and businesses between September and November 2018.

Note to editors

- ¹ To be eligible for the offer, users must meet the Unmonitored Medical Alarm Upgrade Offer eligibility criteria which include (amongst other things) having an eligible existing unmonitored medical alarm, living in an area that will be getting a fixed-line connection to the **nbn™** access network and signing up to NBN Co's Medical Alarm Register.
- ²The discount is 80 per cent off the alarm supplier's normal retail price, up to a maximum discount of \$300 off.
- This requirement only affects end users on fixed line services. Migration on our fixed wireless and satellite service is optional as the existing networks aren't switched off, so unmonitored medical alarm users can continue to run their existing services [over copper] in parallel with NBN Co.
- Full eligibility criteria are published at nbn.com.au/alarmupgrade

Background information

- NBN Co established the Medical Alarms Register in March 2014 to help support people who have medical alarm devices migrate successfully across to services over the **nbn™** access network. By identifying those who have personal medical alerts and alarms, NBN Co can help facilitate individuals, including the elderly receive the appropriate assistance when it comes time to move these services over to the **nbn™** access network. There are currently more than 260,000 entries on the Medical Alarm Register.
- NBN Co has been working with the medical alarm industry since 2011 and has continuously worked on improving and implementing initiatives throughout the **nbn™** access network rollout to help inform medical alarm users of the process to determine the compatibility of their existing devices when migrating landline phone and internet services over to an nbn powered plan.

Types of medical alarms

- A professionally monitored medical alarm calls an alarm monitoring centre that you generally pay a monthly fee to (though this fee may be paid on your behalf by another care organisation). When you press the help button, your call is answered by an operator at the alarm company.
- A locally monitored medical alarm calls the staff at your retirement village or aged care facility. A nurse or staff member on-site answers the call.
- An unmonitored medical alarm calls a family member, friend, neighbour or 000 when triggered.

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Resources

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