

OFA Teams With Doyle Medical Monitoring

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MAYVILLE - The Chautauqua County Office for the Aging has teamed up with Doyle Medical Monitoring in Rochester to create Chautauqua County Personal Monitoring.

The collaboration will allow senior citizens and disabled individuals to receive a personal emergency response system that is more affordable, safe and convenient.

Doyle's Personal Monitoring System enables residents to call for help at the push of a button. The system comes with a two-way speaker console that can be mounted on the wall, a sealed water-resistant pendant, a wrist strap or necklace, and a 32-hour backup battery in case of a power outage.

The pendant transmits inside and outside up to 300 feet away from the console and fall victims can communicate with responders up to 150 feet away from the console.

Previously, the OFA was under a contract with Philips Lifeline in Boston, Mass. Those who qualified for OFA funding could get the system on a sliding scale cost depending on their income because of state and federal grants that OFA received. If clients did not qualify for OFA funding or if there was no funding available, they were required to pay a private pay rate of \$38 a month and an initial installation fee of \$50. Other fees would also be charged for additional buttons or to repair/replace equipment.

Under the new contract with Doyle, OFA will continue to provide personal emergency response on a sliding scale to their clients 60 and over who meet criteria and as funding allows. However, the new contract with Doyle also allows the Office for the Aging to provide this service to other county residents at a private pay rate of \$25 with no installation fee. This means that anyone of any age who wants a personal emergency response system, even if they do not qualify for OFA services, can get a discounted monthly rate because of the buying power of the County's Office for Aging. In addition, the contract with Doyle means that local people will be answering the calls and local support staff will professionally install and service the monitors. There are no charges for additional buttons and all service calls are included in the monthly service charge.

Dr. Mary Ann Spanos, director of the Chautauqua County Office for the Aging, said that this new contract will result in an initial savings to the county of close to \$50,000 per a year.

"This contract will mean significant savings for the Office for the Aging and residents who were paying a high cost for an individual contract. Personal Emergency Response Systems are a simple but important device that give people piece of mind and allow them to maintain independent and active lives," said Spanos.

In addition to saving money, participants will now reach a local emergency response center instead of being connected to respondents in Boston, Mass. The emergency response center for Chautauqua County Personal Monitoring is based in Rochester, N.Y., where specially trained operators will answer any time a participant presses either the button on the console or on their pendant. Responders will address the needs of the caller and make sure that key contacts on the individual's personal notification list are called. Chautauqua County Personal Monitoring also has a local customer service office based out of the Jamestown OFA office on 610 West Third St.

"By entering into a new contract with Doyle, we have been able to reduce the cost of personal monitoring systems for county residents," said Chautauqua County Executive Gregory J. Edwards. "It also gives seniors and fall victims the opportunity to maintain their independence as they can safely stay in their homes for a longer period of time."

Another special feature that Doyle offers is if the participant is out of the console's range for more than 24 hours, the system will automatically dial out to Chautauqua County Monitoring and they can call someone to check up on the participant.

Spanos said that residents who had previously purchased Lifeline through the Office for the Aging are in the process of being switched over to Doyle. The transition is expected to be completed by the end of January.

For more information about Doyle Medical Monitoring services, please contact Pat Truax, customer service representative for Chautauqua County Personal Monitoring, at 661-8941, 363-8941 or 753-8941.