

How do the emergency services find out who to contact on our behalf should something unexpected happen to us?



The autumn will be with us before we know it, bringing with it uneven slippery surfaces and misty early mornings and evenings. Conditions that can easily lead to unexpected situations on the pavements and roads.

These situations can be anything from a road traffic accident, falling ill, taking a tumble in the street or simply becoming lost and disorientated. In fact, any situation where one is unable to speak for oneself.

Contact4me, the leading service for contacting next of kin in an emergency situation was launched in September 2006 by Sue and Steven Salik after their youngest daughter was caught up in the 7/7 terrorist attacks at Kings Cross. Luckily she was in the last carriage of the train and although it filled with smoke she was able to walk to safety with other commuters through the tunnel.

This event made them realise that although their daughter had credit card information on her person, there was nothing to tell the emergency services

who to contact on her behalf if she had been injured and unable to communicate. It was a catalyst for the creation of this enterprise to provide emergency contact details. Huge numbers of people have now joined Contact4me, which holds a database to enable next of kin to be easily contacted in the event of an emergency.

It has been shown to take an average of 5-6 hours and sometimes days - for family members to be contacted in an emergency but now with Contact4me - contact can be made in minutes rather than hours!

It works very simply: Once registered everyone receives a pack with various items of ID, each with a unique membership number and a 24/7 telephone number. The emergency services call the number, quote the unique membership number and are put through to the first of a list of up to 10 contacts chosen by the member as well as being given any crucial medical alerts.

all members are reminded every few months to check

their personal page either by email or post so that all information is up to date. Sue feels it is important that members know constantly that Contact4me is there in the background and available when the need arises with accurate information. Those members on the internet update themselves in real time, but those without internet connection are sent the image of the screen the call centre accesses and they can return that corrected via a freepost envelope.

This service is actually relevant to all ages and groups of society. Sue says, "One of our members is a fit man who runs and walks alone. He used to go out without any ID when he trained, as he always left his keys and wallet at home. He joined Contact4me because he realised that if he was to collapse or have a road traffic accident - no one would know who he was or who to call on his behalf. In fact a few months after he joined he had major heart surgery so he was an accident waiting to happen! now he runs with just his Con-

tact4me card in his track suit trousers - peace of mind for everyone!"

If you have a relative who lives with dementia, then carrying the card, could prove critical in reaching a loved one if they find themselves away from their home lost and confused. The card also holds information for carers so that if they are indisposed the emergency services will be made aware that there is a dependant at home.

It is a stunningly simple idea, and already an enormous number of people are carrying Contact4me cards, as well as having a key fob, weather-proof sticker and other useful items of identification. It is a small card but gives huge peace of mind.

Costs: £16 for first family member for first year, £12 for second family member for first year.

Prices go down in subsequent years.

It's simple to join:

Call Freephone

0800 124 4521

Email: info@contact4me.com

Visit website:

www.contact4me.com



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