# How Two-Way Calling Supports Seniors Living Alone in Remuera

Living alone offers independence, but it also raises a natural question: what happens if you fall, feel unwell, or need help and cannot reach a phone? For many older adults in Remuera and across Auckland, a personal alarm for elderly designed for independent living provides a reliable answer. These devices have moved far beyond the simple button that only calls a monitoring centre. Modern personal alarms include two-way voice calling, which lets you speak directly with a family member or carer through the device itself.

Two-way calling works like a speakerphone built into your pendant or wristband. When you press the SOS button, the alarm connects to your nominated contacts and lets them talk to you through the device's speaker and microphone. You can hear their voice and respond as if they were in the room. This feature matters most when you are on the floor after a fall and cannot reach a phone, or when you feel confused and need reassurance from someone who knows your medical history. Instead of waiting for a stranger at a call centre to dispatch help, your family member can assess the situation immediately and decide the next step.

## How two-way calling changes the response

Traditional medical alarms send an alert to a monitoring centre, where an operator calls back to check on you. If you cannot answer, emergency services are dispatched. That process works but can feel impersonal and slow. Two-way voice calling puts your family at the centre of the response. The alarm calls your nominated contacts in a programmed order until someone answers. The first person to pick up can hear you speak, ask what happened, and decide whether to come over, call a neighbour, or phone an ambulance.

This is especially valuable for someone who lives alone and may be reluctant to bother others. A family member who hears your voice can quickly tell if you sound confused, in pain, or simply have a minor question. They can reassure you, keep you calm while help arrives, or even talk you through getting up safely if a fall was not serious. The direct voice link removes the guesswork and reduces the number of unnecessary ambulance callouts, which can be costly and stressful for everyone involved.

View the location on Google Maps

## What to look for in a personal alarm for elderly

If you are considering a personal alarm for elderly for yourself or a relative in Remuera, several features make the biggest difference to daily use and peace of mind. The first is the range of

the device. Some alarms work only inside the home, while others use mobile networks so you can wear the pendant anywhere with New Zealand mobile coverage. This is important if you still garden, walk to the local shops, or visit friends in the neighbourhood.



Battery life and charging routine also matter. Most devices need charging every few days or once a week. A model with long battery life and a simple cradle charger is easier to keep topped up. Some alarms come with a low-battery alert that notifies your family, which helps if you tend to forget charging. The wearable pendant or wrist button should be comfortable enough to wear all day and durable enough to survive being dropped in the bathroom or kitchen.

Fall detection is another feature that adds real value. Automatic fall detection uses sensors inside the pendant to recognise a fall and trigger the alarm even if you cannot press the button. This is especially useful after a stroke or a slip that leaves you unconscious or unable to move. While no fall detection is perfect, it significantly increases the chance that help will arrive quickly.

## How the calling sequence works in practice

When you press the SOS button, the device starts calling through a list of up to ten nominated contacts. It calls the first person, and if they do not answer within a set time, it moves to the

next. This continues until someone picks up. The person who answers can then speak to you through the device. They can hear your voice and decide what to do. If no one answers after all contacts have been tried, some alarms can be programmed to call 111 directly.

This sequence means you never have to worry about who is available at a given moment. The system works through the contacts you choose, in the order you set. You can change the order or the list at any time by contacting the provider. For an older adult living alone, knowing that a family member will hear your voice within seconds of pressing the button can reduce anxiety and help you feel more confident about staying in your own home.

## Two-way voice and everyday peace of mind

The main benefit of two-way calling is not just the technology but the connection it creates. When you can speak directly to a son, daughter, or neighbour who knows your routine and your health history, the response feels personal. They can ask specific questions: are you dizzy, did you fall, have you taken your medication? They can also talk you through getting comfortable while help is on the way, or simply let you know that someone is coming.




For family members, two-way voice reduces the worry that comes with not knowing what happened. Instead of receiving a silent alert that triggers a call to emergency services, they can hear your voice, judge the severity, and act accordingly. This can save time, reduce stress, and avoid unnecessary trips to hospital. It also helps family members who live far away stay involved in your daily safety without needing to be physically present.

## Choosing the right device for your situation

When looking at options, consider how the alarm is worn. Some people prefer a pendant on a lanyard, while others find a wristband or belt clip more comfortable. A keyring attachment works well for someone who always carries keys. The best choice is the one you will actually

wear every day. A device left on the bedside table is no help when you need it in the garden or at the letterbox.

Also, check whether the device works with a simple SIM card or a dedicated mobile network. In New Zealand, mobile coverage is generally strong in urban areas like Remuera, but it is worth confirming that the device will work in every room of your home and in the outdoor spaces you use. Some devices use a combination of home base unit and mobile connectivity, so you get the best of both worlds.

Charging and maintenance should be as simple as possible. Look for a device that gives clear low-battery warnings and does not require frequent charging. A unit that charges in a cradle and can be worn while charging is more practical than one that needs to be plugged in with a cable. Some providers offer lifetime support, which means you can call for help setting up or troubleshooting at any time without extra cost.

## What it means for daily life

For someone who lives alone in Remuera, a personal alarm with two-way calling changes the feeling of being home alone. It turns the house from a place where help feels far away into a place where help is always a button press away. You can go about your day, take a shower, cook a meal, or work in the garden knowing that if something goes wrong, your family will hear your voice and know what to do. That peace of mind is hard to measure but deeply valuable.



The device does not replace the need for regular contact with family and friends, but it adds a layer of safety that lets you maintain your independence longer. It is a practical tool, not a medical intervention. It supports your existing routines and relationships rather than introducing a new system that feels foreign or intrusive.

Familyr is also on YouTube.

**Familyr** provides personal medical alarms for seniors and people who need support while living independently. Their devices include SOS alerts, GPS location sharing, automatic fall detection and two-way voice calling, and can be worn as a pendant, wristband, belt clip, armband or keyring. For more information, contact Familyr at 14 Grand View Road, Remuera, Auckland 1050, New Zealand, or call +64 9 872 0345.