Going into hospital

Your rights when going into hospital and when you're discharged

Age UK
Love later life

Health & wellbeing

AgeUKIG07

Information and advice you need to help you love later life.

We're Age UK and our goal is to enable older people across the UK to love later life.

We are passionate about affirming that your later years can be fulfilling years. Whether you're enjoying your later life or going through tough times, we're here to help you make the best of your life.

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Introduction

A hospital stay can be a difficult time both for you and for those close to you.

This guide aims to help make preparations and discharge a little easier. It explains the steps that lead up to planned and emergency admissions to hospital and the quality of care you should expect. The first part of this guide looks at what to expect when you're going into hospital, the second part looks at what to expect when you're discharged.

To find out more about the different healthcare systems across the country, contact NHS Direct Wales (see page 37), in Northern Ireland, NI Direct (see page 37) or in Scotland, Health Rights Information Scotland (see page 35).

Throughout this guide you will find suggestions for organisations that can offer further information and advice about your options. Their contact details can be found in the 'Useful organisations' section (see pages 31–38). Contact details for organisations near you can usually be found in your local phone book. If you have difficulty finding them, your local Age UK should be able to help (see page 31).

As far as possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across the UK.

When we refer to your local council, this term includes local county councils, London boroughs, and local authorities.

Key

This symbol indicates where information differs for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

what next?

This symbol indicates who to contact for the next steps you need to take.

Your rights in hospital

When you go into hospital, it's helpful to know what you can expect. You have a right to:

- receive NHS services – you can't be refused access or discriminated against because of your age, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or disability
- receive NHS services within a maximum waiting time (see page 4). In Wales, this is not a legal right although there are waiting time guidelines
- be treated by appropriately qualified and experienced staff, in a safe environment
- receive drugs and treatments approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) that your doctor says are right for you
- be treated with dignity and respect in accordance with your human rights (see page 10)
- accept or refuse treatment you're offered (see page 14)
- expect the NHS to keep your confidential information safe and secure
- have access to your own health records
- expect the hospital to take complaints seriously (see page 16).

These rights are taken from the NHS Constitution, which sets out the guiding principles of the NHS and your rights and responsibilities as an NHS patient.

Arranging a hospital appointment

You and your doctor (GP) may decide that you should see a specialist at a hospital. In England and Scotland you have the right to start your treatment within 18 weeks from the date you were referred by your GP. You should be seen by a cancer specialist within two weeks of an urgent referral. If you can't be seen within the maximum waiting time, your hospital must do what it can to offer alternatives. In Wales, you shouldn't wait more than 26 weeks after being referred by your GP.

If you live in England, you can usually choose the hospital you would prefer to go to and which consultant team should treat you (unless your GP suspects you have cancer, in which case you'll be referred to a specialist centre as soon as possible). Your GP can explain how to book your first appointment or, if you don't want to make the decision yourself, choose for you. To make an appointment in England you can call Choose and Book (see page 33), or book online.

The following questions may help you decide which hospital to choose.

- Do you know someone who has been treated there? What did they think?
- How quickly can you be seen?
- How easy is it to get there by public transport or car?
- Would the location and visiting times be convenient for visitors?
- Is there adequate, affordable car parking?

Visit NHS Choices at www.nhs.uk to compare hospitals across England and other information. For general information about hospitals in Scotland, visit www.nhsinform.co.uk; in Wales, visit www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk. Look at www.patientopinion.org.uk for opinions about hospitals across the UK.

You'll often be invited to a pre-admissions assessment before treatment starts. You can ask questions, and you'll be given advice or a booklet telling you what to expect, how long your stay is likely to be and how to help your own recovery.

Look at www.patientopinion.org.uk for opinions about hospitals across the UK.

Help with travel

If your condition or disability makes using public transport or getting in and out of a car difficult, you may be eligible for free non-emergency NHS transport. If you are, your GP can arrange this for your first appointment. There may also be a voluntary driver scheme.

You can claim a refund for travel costs, including parking, if you receive certain benefits such as Pension Credit Guarantee Credit. Ask the hospital outpatients department for details. If you don't receive any qualifying benefits but you're on a low income, you may be able to get help through the NHS Low Income scheme. Call Help with Health Costs to find out more (see page 36).

Cancer charities such as Macmillan Cancer Support (see page 36) may be able to help if travel costs for frequent treatment cause financial difficulties. Some hospital car parks offer special rates for people receiving frequent treatment. Parking at NHS hospitals is free in much of Scotland, and parking fees are being phased out entirely at NHS hospitals in Wales.

If you're on a low income and visiting a close relative or friend, you may be eligible for help with the cost of your trips. Contact your local council or local Age UK to find out what support is available. In Scotland, you may be eligible for help with travel costs through The Scottish Welfare Fund.

what next?

For more information, see our free factsheet *Help with health costs*. In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *The Scottish Welfare Fund*. In Wales, see Age Cymru's free factsheet *Help with Health Costs in Wales*.

Preparing for a hospital stay

It's worth making a few preparations before you go into hospital.

Check your home insurance to see whether the terms change if the house is unoccupied.

Think about asking a friend or relative to stay with you or visit you when you return from hospital.

Put items you use regularly such as your TV remote control, radio or box of tissues in easy reach near where you'll be spending most of your time when you come out of hospital.

Stock up on drinks and foods that are easy to prepare such as frozen ready meals. Check you have other essential items including basic painkillers ready for when you return.

As well as nightwear and toiletries, remember to pack:

- your appointment card or admission letter
- a small amount of money for phone calls or items from the hospital shop
- all the medicines you normally take, in their original boxes if possible. If you have a card giving details of your current treatment, take this as well
- a notebook and pen to write down any questions you have
- your address book, including the name and telephone number of your GP.

Before you go into hospital, have a bath or shower, wash your hair, cut your nails and put on clean clothes. This will help prevent harmful bacteria coming into hospital with you.

Emergency admission to hospital

If you have a fall, a suspected heart attack or a stroke, you may be taken to a hospital A&E department. The hospital should assess you and decide how best to treat you, thinking about your general health: for example, do you have a long-term condition? Have you fallen before? Once you've been assessed you may be:

- treated but not admitted if support can be provided at home through an intermediate care package (see page 21)
- moved to a Clinical Decisions Unit (CDU) to be monitored or have tests done before deciding whether you need to be admitted
- admitted to hospital.

If you live alone and will be in hospital for some time, ask someone to check that your home is secure.

what next?

If you don't need to be admitted but have had several falls, ask A&E staff or speak to your GP about a referral to your local falls prevention service. Our free guide *Staying steady* has more information on preventing falls and what to expect from the falls prevention service.

Hospital standards

Hospitals must meet certain standards of medical care, safety and cleanliness, and are assessed to see how well privacy and dignity are respected.

Isolating patients who have an infection and making sure staff and visitors clean their hands thoroughly are important ways to stop infection spreading between patients.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is responsible for inspecting hospitals in England to ensure these standards are being met. Visit their website www.cqc.org.uk to find out more. In Scotland, contact the Healthcare Environment Inspectorate (see page 35). In Wales, contact the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (see page 35).

If you have concerns about any aspect of the care you receive, try to raise them immediately. See page 16 for details on how to do this.

what next?

To find an inspection report for the hospital you'll be treated at, visit its website.

Dignity and respect

When you're in hospital you have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. For example, you can expect:

- to be given a named nurse as your main contact for any questions
- to be spoken to in a polite and friendly way and asked how you would like to be addressed
- staff to be aware and respond sensitively if you have hearing or visual difficulties or memory problems
- staff to treat you as an individual and not as though you're 'invisible' when your bed is visited on a ward round
- to have all tasks and procedures explained to you first
- to have your privacy respected. For example, staff should discuss any medical matters with you so that other people can't hear, and ensure the curtains around the bed are secure when you're being examined or using a commode
- to be involved in discussions about your treatment and care in a way you can understand
- to be told the pros and cons of various possible treatments
- any requests you make for help to go to the toilet to be responded to promptly and courteously
- to be allowed to do tasks you can manage for yourself, for example, putting on your dressing gown yourself without help.

Hospitals should no longer have mixed-sex general wards. However, specialist wards may be mixed-sex so that you can be treated by appropriate specialist staff. If this is the case, staff should make sure that your privacy is respected at all times.

what next?

Raise any concerns about the way you're being treated with the nurse in charge of the ward. See page 16 to find out about making a formal complaint.

When you're in hospital you have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Eating and drinking

Eating and drinking enough is a vital part of your recovery, so the staff should help you with this if you need it. There may be protected mealtimes on the ward. This is a time when other activities stop so that nurses and trained volunteers are on hand to help with eating. Anyone who needs help may also be given a red tray to flag this up to hospital staff.

If the person you care for is going into hospital and has dementia, it's a good idea to note down their food and drink preferences for ward staff. See page 15 for more information.

Speak to the nurse in charge of the ward as soon as possible if you:

- need help filling in your menu choices
- find menu choices unsuitable due to allergies, cultural or personal preferences
- find it hard to reach your meal or drink
- have difficulty cutting your food or opening cartons
- prefer smaller meals with between-meal snacks
- have trouble chewing or swallowing.

You may be weighed on arrival at hospital and regularly afterwards. Your diet should be adjusted if there are any concerns about your weight.

what next?

Visit our website to find out more about the seven steps that Age UK believes will help to ensure that people get the help they need to eat and drink while in hospital and the outcomes of our Hungry to Be Heard campaign (see page 31).

‘I can’t see very well and often wasn’t sure what I’d ordered to eat. Since I told them, someone helps me fill in the menu. The assistant who brings my meal makes sure I can reach it. If I ask, the assistant will tell me what I ordered and where different foods are on the plate.’

Consent and right to refuse treatment

Any proposed examination, treatment or investigation should be clearly explained to you, including the risks and benefits, before you agree to it. You can refuse treatment as long as you understand what the consequences might be, even if others consider your decision unwise.

In England and Wales, if you're unable to consent to treatment even with appropriate support (for example if you're unconscious or have advanced dementia), then a doctor must act in your best interests. Your family can't give consent on your behalf (unless you've authorised this in a personal welfare power of attorney), but the doctor should ask them about your likely wishes.

If you need serious medical treatment and you have no family or friends to support you, medical staff must appoint an Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) to represent your interests. There are no IMCAs in Scotland but people with a mental illness have an automatic right to independent advocacy. Contact the Office of the Public Guardian (Scotland) to find out more (see page 37).

what next?

To find out about the benefits of a personal welfare power of attorney, see our guide *Powers of attorney.*
In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *Powers of attorney and other ways to help manage someone's affairs*. Find out more by contacting the Office of the Public Guardian or in Scotland, the Office of the Public Guardian Scotland (see page 37).

Staying in hospital if someone has dementia

Hospital wards can be frightening and disorientating for someone with dementia. Many hospitals now have Dementia Champions to advise staff on the ward about how best to care for someone with dementia. If you care for someone with dementia, there is also a lot you can do to help and reassure them when they go into hospital.

- Tell the nurse in charge that the person has dementia and ask what dementia care initiatives are in place at the hospital.
- Write down their needs and preferences or fill out the Alzheimer's Society's leaflet *This is me*. Download it from www.alzheimers.org.uk/thisisme or call 01628 529 240 to get a copy.
- Ask for the name of the nurse in charge of the person's care to be your main contact. Ask to be included in any decisions about treatment or care.
- If they have difficulties eating or drinking, ask if someone on the ward can help them. Or, if you can, ask whether you can help at mealtimes.
- Familiar objects on the bedside table, such as a photograph of family members or pet, can be reassuring for someone with dementia.

what next?

See our free guide *Caring for someone with dementia*.
Contact the Alzheimer's Society for more information and their free factsheet *Care on a hospital ward* (see page 32).
In Scotland, contact Alzheimer Scotland (see page 32).

Problems and complaints during your hospital stay

If you have any problems, try to raise them at the time. Speak first to the doctor or nurse in charge of the ward. If this doesn't resolve the problems, staff can tell you who to approach if you wish to make a formal complaint or you can contact the hospital Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). In Wales, contact your local Community Health Council (see page 34).

There are different ways to get support when making a complaint, depending on where you live.

- In England, contact your local independent NHS Complaints Advocacy service. Ask your hospital PALS for contact details.
- In Wales, ask your Community Health Council about their Complaints Advocacy Service.
- In Scotland, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau (see page 34) to access the Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS).
- In Northern Ireland, contact the Patient and Client Council (see page 38).

Making a complaint shouldn't affect the quality of care you receive.

what next?

For information about making a complaint in England, see our free factsheet *Resolving problems and making a complaint about NHS care*. In Wales, see Age Cymru's factsheet *Resolving problems and making a complaint about NHS care in Wales*. In Scotland, read the factsheet *Giving feedback or making a complaint about the NHS* on the Health Rights Information Scotland website (see page 35).

Getting ready to leave hospital

The hospital should tell you who is arranging your discharge and, if possible, the probable date you will leave. A discharge co-ordinator and hospital social worker are likely to be involved if you'll need support when you leave. However, if you're only likely to need help for a week or two with domestic tasks such as shopping and light housework, you'll find more information on page 25.

Before you leave, a discharge co-ordinator should:

- decide whether the NHS will remain responsible for your care (see pages 18–19)
- assess what help you might need when you leave (see pages 18–19)
- assess the needs of your carer, if you have one (see pages 18–19)
- decide whether you would benefit from intermediate care or reablement (see page 21)
- draw up a care plan (see page 19)
- decide who will be paying for your care (see page 24)
- look at practical issues on leaving hospital (see page 26)
- review your care plan after an agreed time (see page 27).

Arrangements will vary depending on your needs and on whether you can go home, or whether you may need alternative accommodation as a temporary or permanent option.

When you're discharged in England, you'll be asked whether you would recommend the hospital to your friends and family if they needed similar treatment. This is called the Friends and Family Test and helps hospitals assess how good their care is. You don't have to answer, but any feedback you give will be anonymous and help make sure the hospital maintains high standards.

what next?

See our free factsheet *Hospital discharge arrangements* to find out more. In Wales, see Age Cymru's version of this factsheet. In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *NHS continuing healthcare and hospital discharge arrangements*. Look at the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk to see the results of the Friends and Family test.

Assessing the needs of you and your carer

You should have a care needs assessment by appropriate health and social care professionals to decide what help you may need on leaving hospital. The person carrying it out should look at your health and social needs, as well as the emotional and social side of your life. You may need help with things like personal care or preparing and eating meals, as well as NHS support from a nurse or physiotherapist, for example.

If you have significant physical or mental health needs as well as personal care needs, ask staff if you may be eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare. This care can be provided in a care home, your own home or other suitable location.

As well as contributing to your assessment, your carer is entitled to a separate care assessment. If this cannot be conducted at the time, your carer should contact social services to arrange one.

what next?

For more information see our free guides *Care at home* and *Advice for carers* and free factsheets *Local authority assessment for community care services* and *NHS continuing healthcare and NHS-funded nursing care*. In Wales and Scotland see Age Cymru and Age Scotland's versions of these factsheets.

Drawing up a care plan

Once you've been assessed, your needs are compared with your local council's eligibility criteria for help and support. These are the needs your council must meet for you. Staff should discuss your options with you and shouldn't take any support from your carer for granted.

You may need:

- help with personal care – getting up and dressed, bathing
- help with eating well, such as meals on wheels, or lunch at a day centre
- to make your home safer and easier to live in, for example with aids and adaptations
- a personal alarm so that you can call for help if needed
- services from community health staff
- an opportunity to meet people and socialise, such as a place at a day centre
- a move to a more manageable property such as sheltered housing, or extra-care sheltered housing.

If you need a lot of help when you leave hospital, it may seem like you'll need a permanent place in a care home. However, before reaching this decision, staff should seriously consider whether intermediate care or reablement services might allow you to continue living in your own home (see page 21).

If you do need a permanent place in a care home, you should be assessed to see whether you're eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare.

You should be given a written care plan that you have agreed that shows what help you'll get. If you're not happy with it, talk to the person responsible for your discharge. If you're still unhappy, you can make a complaint (see page 16).

what next?

For more information, see our free guides *Care at home, Care homes* and free factsheets *Finding help at home* and *Finding care home accommodation*. In Wales, see Age Cymru's versions of these factsheets. In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *Local authority assessment for community care services.*

Contact your local council social services department (social work department in Scotland) for information about its services or complaints procedure. See page 24 for information on who should pay for care services.

Supporting you to return home

Intermediate care and reablement services are about helping you to regain your independence and confidence after an illness or injury, and stay living at home.

Intermediate care can last for up to six weeks (four weeks in Scotland) and is provided free in England and Wales. You can receive it at home, in a day hospital, community hospital or care home. The services offered may include nursing or personal care at home or physiotherapy at a day hospital.

When your intermediate care finishes, you should have an assessment to see whether you need any ongoing care or health services.

Reablement services are normally provided in your own home for a fixed period and aim to support you in doing as much as you can for yourself. For example, you could increase your confidence with tasks such as washing or dressing. At the end of this period of care, your needs should be reassessed to see whether you need any longer term support at home.

Reablement services should be provided free of charge for up to six weeks (four weeks in Scotland where this service may simply be known as a period of rehabilitation).

what next?

If you could benefit from intermediate care or reablement, ask the person responsible for your discharge to explain the first steps. See our free factsheet *Intermediate care and re-ablement* for more information. In Wales, see Age Cymru's version of this factsheet.

My story

‘I was so bewildered after my fall, I can’t believe I’ve come so far. I felt really low but the staff gave me so much confidence.’

Mrs Patterson, an active 83-year-old, tripped and fell while out shopping.

‘When I fell, an ambulance was called and I was taken to the A&E department at the local hospital. It turned out I’d broken my hip. They kept me in and I had a hip replacement operation. The operation went well and I was out of bed the next day and taking a few steps.

‘After a week, I moved to the community hospital for intermediate care. The occupational therapist wanted to see if I could move from walking with crutches to using a frame and then a stick, in three weeks.

‘The care assistants took me home to see how I’d cope – particularly with the stairs, as my flat is on the first floor. I reached my targets and was ready to go home at the end of the three weeks.

‘I was so bewildered after my fall, I can’t believe I’ve come so far. I felt really low but the staff gave me so much confidence. They’ve given me a trolley on wheels so I can move things safely. I wouldn’t carry hot drinks myself, otherwise, and I’ve no one to carry things for me. I’ve got a commode in my bedroom for night-time. I don’t want to stumble on my way to the bathroom.’

Deciding who should pay for your care

Local councils can charge for the services they provide. There's one system for charging for care in your own home and a different system if you are in a care home. You may be able to get financial assistance from your council depending on your savings, property, investments and income. See our free guides *Care at home* and *Care homes* for more information.

You should have had a financial assessment following your care needs assessment. If you didn't, ask your local council for one. If you're eligible for financial support you can receive help in your own home or, if appropriate, a place in a care home. In England, you can also be offered a personal budget or direct payment to arrange your own care at home. See our free guide *Personal budgets in social care* to find out more.

In Wales, you may be able to opt for a direct payment. See Age Cymru's free factsheet *Self-directed support: direct payments in Wales* for more information. In Wales, people who receive care in their own home from the local council shouldn't pay more than a maximum of £50 a week.

In Scotland, some financial assistance is available through the Free Personal Care system for people over 65. For more information, see Age Scotland's factsheet *Council charging procedures for care homes*. In Northern Ireland, care at home is provided free.

what next?

See our free factsheets *Paying for care and support at home* and *Paying for permanent residential care* for more detailed information. In Wales, see Age Cymru's versions of both these factsheets. In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *Local authority assessment for community care services.*

If you only need a little help at home

You may only need help with domestic tasks for a few weeks while you recover, particularly if you live alone. The person responsible for your discharge should look at what you need and suggest local organisations that can help.

Your local Age UK and other voluntary organisations may offer 'home from hospital support'. These services may help to get your home ready for your return and assist with non-medical tasks such as shopping and light housework. You can also pay home care agencies for help with domestic tasks.

what next?

Contact your local Age UK to see what support is available. Ask the person responsible for your discharge or your local council for a list of registered care agencies. In Scotland, contact the Care Inspectorate (see page 32) or Shared Care Scotland (see page 38) to find out what is available.

Practical issues when leaving hospital

The hospital can discharge you when it thinks you're ready. However, you shouldn't be sent home until support is in place, services are ready to start, any adaptations have been made and any appropriate equipment has been delivered. Your carers should also be told in advance when you'll be discharged.

The person responsible for your discharge should ensure that:

- you have clothes to go home in and front-door keys
- you have enough money for your short-term needs
- there is someone collecting you, or a taxi or hospital transport is booked
- you and/or your carer understand any new medications you've been given and you have a supply to take home
- you and/or your carer can use any new equipment or aids with confidence
- if you need incontinence products, a supply has been arranged
- your GP has been informed of your discharge, and any help you need from a district nurse has been arranged
- you know who to contact about your care plan or services.

If you are moving to a care home, the home should have the date and time of your discharge and a copy of your care plan. If the care home you want to move to doesn't have a vacancy, you could be asked to stay in another one temporarily.

Reviewing your care plan

If you go home and social services have arranged support for you, they must check it still suits your needs within two weeks of your return. After this, your care plan should be reviewed at least once a year, or more often if needed.

If, at any time, you find that the services aren't suitable, you should contact social services and ask for a review of your care plan.

Welfare benefits while in hospital

Your State Pension doesn't change, no matter how long you are in hospital, but Attendance Allowance (AA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are suspended after 28 days. Other benefits such as Pension Credit can be affected if you lose AA, DLA or PIP. Carer's Allowance can be affected if you or the person you care for go into hospital.

If you have a motability vehicle, you will need to contact the motability scheme if your PIP or DLA is suspended.

what next?

Call the office that pays your disability benefit to let them know when you're admitted and discharged. Its details will be on your award letter.

Problems and complaints after you've left hospital

If you're not happy with the social care support you receive after you've left hospital, first discuss it with the agency providing the service. If you need to make a formal complaint, ask them for a copy of their complaints procedure. If you're not happy with the outcome, then either:

- raise your complaint with social services if you're receiving care arranged by them. Ask your social worker what you need to do
- contact the Local Government Ombudsman (see page 36) if you're paying for your own care services and have a contract directly with the care agency. In Scotland, contact the Care Inspectorate (see page 32). In Wales, contact the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (see page 32).

Making a complaint shouldn't affect the quality of care you receive.

If you have concerns about an NHS service you're receiving at home, first raise it directly with the staff concerned. If they can't help, you can make a formal complaint. In England, contact your local Healthwatch (see page 35). They can also give you details of your local independent NHS Complaints Advocacy service who can support you. In Wales, contact your local Community Health Council (CHC) (see page 34). See page 16 for who to contact in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

If your complaint is about both NHS and social services, you need only make one complaint covering all your issues to either the NHS or your local council.

what next?

For information about making a complaint in England, see our free factsheet *How to resolve problems and make a complaint about social care.* In Wales, see Age Cymru's free factsheet *Local authority assessment for community care services in Wales.* In Scotland, see Age Scotland's free factsheet *Local authority assessment for community care services.*

If you go home and social services have arranged support for you, they must check it still suits your needs within two weeks of your return.

Helpful names and telephone numbers

Hospital ward .....

Ward doctor .....

Nurse in charge of the ward .....

.....

My main contact nurse .....

.....

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

.....

Hospital discharge co-ordinator .....

.....

My local council Social Services department

.....

My GP practice .....

.....

My local Age UK .....

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Useful organisations

Age UK
We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65
Lines are open seven days a week from 8am to 7pm.
www.ageuk.org.uk

Call Age UK Advice to find out whether there is a local Age UK near you, and to order free copies of our information guides and factsheets.

In Wales, contact
Age Cymru: 0800 022 3444
www.agecymru.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact
Age NI: 0808 808 7575
www.ageni.org

In Scotland, contact **Age Scotland** by calling Silver Line Scotland: 0800 470 8090 (This is a partnership between The Silver Line and Age Scotland)
www.agescotland.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society
Offers advice, information and support to people with dementia, their families and carers.

Tel: 0300 222 1122
Email: enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk
www.alzheimers.org.uk

In Scotland, contact **Alzheimer Scotland**
Tel: 0808 808 3000
Email: helpline@alzscot.org
www.alzscot.org

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW)
Oversees the inspection and regulation of care and social services in Wales.

Tel: 0300 062 8800
Email: cssiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk
www.cssiw.org.uk

Care Inspectorate
National independent regulator of social care and social work services in Scotland.

Tel: 0845 600 9527
Email: enquiries@careinspectorate.com
www.scswis.com

Care Quality Commission (CQC)
National independent regulator of all health and social care services in England.

Tel: 03000 61 61 61
Publications orderline: 03003 230 200
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk
www.cqc.org.uk

Carers Direct
Help and support for carers.

Tel: 0300 123 1053 (England only)
Textphone: 0300 123 1004
www.nhs.uk/carersdirect
www.carersdirectenquiry.nhs.uk (online enquiries)

Carers UK
Provides information and support for carers.

Tel: 0808 808 7777
Email: advice@carersuk.org
www.carersuk.org

In Scotland, contact **Carers Scotland**
Tel: 0141 445 3070
www.carersuk.org/scotland

In Wales, contact **Carers Wales**
Tel: 029 2081 1370
www.carersuk.org/wales

Choose and Book
Allows you to choose your hospital or clinic and book an appointment with a specialist if your GP refers you. You can make your appointment through the NHS Appointments Line. (This service is only available in England.)

Tel: 0345 608 8888
www.chooseandbook.nhs.uk

Citizens Advice

National network of advice centres offering free, confidential and independent advice, face-to-face or by telephone.

Tel: 0300 0231 231 – for details of your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

In Wales, there is a national phone advice service on 0844 477 2020. It is available in some parts of England on 0844 411 1444.

In Scotland, there is a national phone advice service on 0808 800 9060.

Find details of your nearest CAB in:
England or Wales: www.citizensadvice.org.uk
Northern Ireland: www.citizensadvice.co.uk
Scotland: www.cas.org.uk
Visit www.adviceguide.org.uk for online information

Community Health Councils (CHCs)

Statutory and independent voice for health services in Wales. Provides advice and support if you wish to make a complaint about NHS services. To find the CHC for your area contact:

Tel: 0845 644 7814
Email: enquiries@waleschc.org.uk
www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/899/home

Elderly Accommodation Counsel

Provides free advice to older people on their housing options and maintains a comprehensive database of UK care homes.

Tel: 0800 377 7070 or 020 3519 6002
Email: info@firststopadvice.org.uk
www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk

Healthcare Environment Inspectorate / Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Inspects healthcare services and supports healthcare providers in Scotland.

Tel: 0131 623 4300
www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales

Independent inspectorate and regulator of NHS healthcare and independent healthcare organisations in Wales.

Tel: 0300 062 8163
Email: hiw@wales.gsi.gov.uk
www.hiw.org.uk

Health Rights Information Scotland

Provides information about patients' health rights and health services in Scotland.

Tel: 0800 22 44 88
Email: nhs.inform@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk
www.hris.org.uk

Healthwatch

A local Healthwatch provides information, advice and support to users of health services in your area. It can also put you in contact with your local NHS Complaints Advocacy service. In Wales, there are Complaints Advocacy Services run by local Community Health Councils.

To find your local Healthwatch call 03000 683 000 or visit www.healthwatch.co.uk

Help with Health Costs

Contact to request an application form (HC1) if you think you might be eligible for help with health costs through the NHS Low Income Scheme. Information is available in different formats.

Tel: 0300 330 1343 or 0191 279 0565
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/HealthCosts/1136.aspx

Local Government Ombudsman

Investigates complaints about adult social care providers in England.

Tel: 0300 061 0614
www.lgo.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Support

Provides practical, medical and financial support for people affected by cancer. It can provide financial support for travel costs to hospital in some circumstances.

Tel: 0808 808 0000
Textphone: 0808 808 0121
www.macmillan.org.uk

NHS Choices

A comprehensive information service to help you take control of your healthcare; website includes an A–Z health dictionary, a symptom checker, a list of common health questions and useful contacts.

www.nhs.uk

For equivalent information in Wales visit **NHS Direct Wales**
Tel: 0845 4647
www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk

For equivalent information in Northern Ireland, visit **NI Direct**
www.nidirect.gov.uk

In Scotland, if your doctor's surgery is closed then contact **NHS 24** on 111 or visit www.nhs24.com

NHS Inform
Health information and advice for people in Scotland.

Tel: 0800 22 44 88
www.nhsinform.co.uk

Office of the Public Guardian
Provides information on the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and produces two booklets called *Making Decisions*, one for individuals (code OPG601) and another for families and carers (code OPG602). Download a copy from the website.

Tel: 0300 456 0300
Email: customerservices@publicguardian.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/office-of-public-guardian

Office of the Public Guardian Scotland
Provides information on the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 (as amended) and provides guidance and advice on powers of attorney and guardianship orders in Scotland.

Tel: 01324 678 300
Email: opg@scotcourts.gov.uk
www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk

Patient and Client Council

Provides support and advice when making a complaint relating to health and social care in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 0800 917 0222
Email: info.pcc@hscni.net
www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net

Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

Independent body responsible for monitoring and inspecting the availability and quality of health and social care services in Northern Ireland.

Tel: 028 9051 7500
Email: info@rqia.org.uk
www.rqia.org.uk

Shared Care Scotland

National charity providing advice and information on short break and respite services.

Tel: 01383 622462
Email: office@sharedcarescotland.com
www.sharedcarescotland.org.uk

Can you help Age UK?

Please complete the donation form below with a gift of whatever you can afford and return to: RSXZ-KTTS-KSHT, Age UK, Tavis House, 1–6 Tavistock Square, LONDON WC1H 9NA. Alternatively, you can phone 0800 169 87 87 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/donate. If you prefer, you can donate directly to one of our national or local partners. Thank you.

Personal details

Title: | Initials: | Surname:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel: | Email:

By providing your email address and/or mobile number you are agreeing to us contacting you in these ways. You may contact us at any time to unsubscribe from our communications.

Your gift

I would like to make a gift of: £

☐ I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to Age UK

Card payment

I wish to pay by (please tick) ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ CAF CharityCard ☐ Maestro ☐ American Express

(Maestro only)

Signature **X**

Expiry date / Issue no. (Maestro only)

Gift aid declaration

☐ (please tick) Yes, I want Age UK and its partner organisations* to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as gift aid donations. I confirm I pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the charity will reclaim on my donations in the tax year. Date: ___/___/___ (please complete). *Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI

age UK
Love later life

We will use the information you have supplied to communicate with you according to data protection guidelines. Age UK (registered charity number 1128267) comprises the charity, its group of companies and national partners (Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI). If you would prefer not to hear from them or carefully selected third parties, let us know by phoning 0800 107 8977.

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Supporting the work of Age UK

Age UK aims to enable all older people to love later life. We provide vital services, support, information and advice to thousands of older people across the UK.

In order to offer free information guides like this one, Age UK relies on the generosity of its supporters. If you would like to help us, here are a few ways you could get involved:

1 Make a donation

To make a donation to Age UK, simply complete the enclosed donation form, call us on **0800 169 8787** or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/get-involved**

2 Donate items to our shops

By donating an unwanted item to one of our shops, you can help generate vital funds to support our work. To find your nearest Age UK shop, visit **www.ageuk.org.uk** and enter your postcode into the 'What does Age UK do in your area?' search function. Alternatively, call us on **0800 169 8787**

3 Leave a gift in your will

Nearly half the money we receive from supporters come from gifts left in wills. To find out more about how you could help in this way, please call the Age UK legacy team on **020 3033 1421** or email **legacies@ageuk.org.uk**

Thank you!

What should I do now?

For more information on the issues covered in this guide, or to order any of our publications, please call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65** or visit **www.ageuk.org.uk/healthandwellbeing**

Our publications are also available in large print and audio formats.

The following Age UK information guides may be useful:

- *Care at home*
- *Caring for someone with dementia*
- *More money in your pocket: a guide to claiming benefits for people over pension age*

The Age UK Group offers a wide range of products and services specially designed for people in later life. For more information, please call **0800 169 18 19**.

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the box below, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.

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