

# Getting help at home



What to do if you need  
care and support at home

# Information written with you in mind.

This information guide has been produced with the help of older people and carers as well as expert peer reviewers.

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## What this guide is about

Have you recently started to feel that you could do with a little extra help at home? Maybe you could use a hand with the housework, gardening or shopping? Or perhaps you're finding it harder to move around your house, or take care of yourself? It could be time to see what help is available.

Asking for help can be hard. You might not want to admit that you're struggling with everyday tasks, but it's something we all face as we get older. The good news is there's lots of help available, so you can continue to live safely and independently at home for longer.

**“I’m starting to find things trickier than I used to. I could do with a little help around the house.”**

**Audrey, 77**



This guide gives you an overview of the help on offer. It also tells you how to access it and different ways to pay for it.



As far as possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across England and Wales. This symbol indicates where information differs for Wales. In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI and in Scotland, contact Age Scotland for more information.

## **Next steps**



It’s a good idea to find out the number for your local council. They’ll be able to provide some of the support and information mentioned in this guide.

**My local council number is:**



## Having a care needs assessment

**As you get older, you might find you need some help with personal care, such as washing and dressing.**

It can be hard to admit you can't do these things on your own anymore and it's understandable if you're reluctant to ask for help. You might worry that you'll be a burden on others, or that you'll lose your independence or privacy. But needing a little help to do certain things is a normal part of ageing and there's no need to feel embarrassed about it.

If you need help with personal care, the first step is to contact the social services department of your local council, or ask a family member or friend to do it for you. Explain that you need some help at home and ask for a care needs assessment (also known as a needs assessment). Sometimes your doctor may refer you for an assessment, or it can be part of your hospital discharge. It's free and you can get one regardless of your income or savings. Ask how long you'll wait for your assessment and tell them if you need help urgently.

## Step one: your care needs assessment

There are various ways a social care professional can assess you but generally they come to your home to see how you're managing everyday tasks and what you'd like to achieve in your day-to-day life. They look at:

- your health, abilities and what you can and can't do, or struggle to do
- your current living arrangements
- what help you currently get, if any, and whether this can continue. For example, it may be that friends and family are helping you now but can't continue to do so long-term.
- how you would like to be supported
- any concerns your carer has, if you have one.

The assessor should consider the emotional and social side of your life, and your overall wellbeing as well as your physical safety. If necessary, and with your permission, they should contact any health and social care professionals who need to be involved in your assessment and care. If you have a carer, they should be involved and should also be assessed for their needs.

**“I got in touch with Age UK about getting some help at home and they recommended my first port of call should be an assessment from my local council.”**

Jim, 80





The assessor considers the type of help you need and whether your needs are great enough for the council to help you. If you're not eligible for help from the council, they should recommend how else your needs should be met. Assessors should consider not only the support you need right now but also the support that would prevent you needing more significant help in the future.

You can prepare for your assessment by thinking about the kind of help you need. Be specific. For example, 'I need someone to help me get up and dressed in the mornings', 'I need help to shower regularly' or 'I need to be reminded to take my medication'. Think about your cultural, social, religious and emotional needs too, as these may be relevant in your assessment. For example, 'I want to go to my place of worship once a week' or 'I want to visit my brother twice a month'.

Ask a family member, friend or carer to be there for your assessment if you can. The council must provide you with an advocate if there's no appropriate person to support you and you're unable to express yourself or have difficulty understanding others and the assessment process. An advocate is someone who can help you say what you want to if you're physically unable to do so or have difficulty expressing yourself well.



## Step two: your care plan

Whether or not you're eligible for support from the council depends on your needs. There are national eligibility criteria that you must be assessed against and the things you need help with must have a significant impact on your wellbeing.



Wales has its own national eligibility criteria that all local councils must comply with.

The support your council provides can include:

- adaptations or equipment to make your home safer or easier to live in
- help from home carers or a personal assistant
- day care in a day centre.

After the assessment, a care plan (sometimes called a support plan) should be agreed and you should get a copy. The care plan is helpful even if you're arranging your own care or help privately, as it shows you what your needs are and what support could help you, including help other than social care.

## Step three: the financial assessment

If a needs assessment shows you qualify for support, you'll have a financial assessment (also called a means test) to see whether you have to contribute towards the cost of it. This considers your income, including pensions, benefits and savings.

When deciding how much to charge you, the council must work out what you can afford to pay so that you're left with a reasonable level of income. See page 24 to find out more.

## Step four: deciding what care services you get and how they'll be arranged

How much financial help you'll get from the council can depend on local costs for services. See page 24 to find out more.

If the council will pay for all or some of your care costs, you have two options:

1. The council can arrange care services for you.
2. The council can give you a direct payment, which is a cash payment you can use to pay for a carer or any other services that help meet your needs.

See pages 24–31 to find out more about different ways to pay for your care.

**“It took a few calls but I’m really glad I stuck with it as it was definitely worth having an assessment.”**

Alex, 74



## Next steps

Read our factsheets **Finding help at home** and **Paying for care and support at home** for more information. In Wales, read Age Cymru’s factsheet **Social care assessments for older people with care needs in Wales**.



## Getting support at home

Having a home that's clean and comfortable can go a long way towards helping you feel happy and healthy. If you're no longer able to keep your home as tidy as you'd like, don't be afraid to ask for help.

### Help around the house

Sometimes just a little support with the housework or gardening means you can enjoy living at home without worrying about how you'll get everything done.

#### Help with cleaning

If you could use some help with cleaning, start by asking around for recommendations. You'll be inviting a new person into your home, so it's important to find someone you trust. You could:

- ask your neighbours or local friends for a recommendation
- ask your local Age UK or Age Cymru if it provides a cleaning service or has a list of suggested cleaners
- contact your local council to see if it has a list of approved cleaning agencies.

Make a list of the chores you'd like done and work out how many hours you can afford to pay for. Charges will vary, but you can find out the average cost of cleaners in your area by asking a few different ones for quotes. If you can't afford to have your whole house cleaned every week, focus on the jobs you find most difficult, such as changing your bed sheets.

Your cleaner might also help with laundry, so do ask if that's something you need. You could also ask your dry cleaners if they have a delivery service or special rates for older people. Some people offer ironing services in their homes and may be able to pick up your ironing and deliver it back to you.

### **Help with cooking**

If you're finding it difficult to cook, you could buy ready meals from the supermarket, or try one of the specialist companies that provide frozen or chilled meals ready for you to heat up. Some also offer hot meals. You can ring these companies for a catalogue and many have websites with detailed menu and dietary options.

There might also be lunch clubs in your area. Ask your local Age UK or council for details. You could also be eligible for meals on wheels for a small charge if you have particular needs. Contact your local council for an assessment (pages 6–10).





## Help with DIY and gardening

Doing DIY or small jobs around the house and garden can be a chore whatever your age, but especially if you aren't as mobile as you used to be. More than 70 local Age UKs have handyperson schemes that offer older people extra help with practical jobs. There is usually a small hourly cost for these services.

## Next steps



Contact Age UK or Age Cymru to find out if there's a handyperson or gardening scheme in your area. Contact Foundations to find your local Home Improvement Agency for assistance (page 38) or in Wales, contact Care & Repair Cymru (page 38). You can also contact Thrive, a charity that offers practical advice to make gardening easier (page 40).

## Help getting out and about

If getting out to the shops is tricky, see if a volunteer from your local Age UK or the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) (page 40) can go with you or even do your shopping for you. You can order shopping online from most supermarkets and have it delivered for a small fee. If ordering online isn't for you, is there a friend or relative who could help? If you'd like to get online, contact Online Centres Network (page 39) to find your nearest centre.

There might be a transport service such as Dial-a-Ride in your area. This is a door-to-door minibus service for people who can't use public transport. Drivers are trained to help people who have mobility problems.

**“My son helped me set up my online shop. It was daunting at first, but I've got the hang of it now. I quite enjoy it.”**

Jean, 80



### Next steps



Visit [www.gov.uk/community-transport-services-shopmobility](http://www.gov.uk/community-transport-services-shopmobility) or ask your local council for more information.

Contact your local Age UK to find out about the transport schemes available in your area.

## Help taking care of yourself

As you get older it sometimes gets harder to take care of your appearance. Even if you don't need a carer, you might appreciate occasional help with personal grooming, such as washing your hair or cutting your toenails. It's not always easy to ask for help with these sorts of things and you might feel a bit embarrassed or uncomfortable about it, but the people helping you are professionals who are used to doing it, and often they can visit you at home.

If you need help cutting your nails, contact your local Age UK. It may offer a nail-cutting service or be able to recommend someone who can do it. If you have a long-term condition, such as diabetes or arthritis, your feet are particularly vulnerable. Check them regularly and make sure you attend any checkups as requested. If you notice any problems, see your doctor as soon as possible. They may refer you to an NHS chiropodist. You could also choose to see a private chiropodist. Contact the The College of Podiatry (page 40) to find someone nearby.

If washing your hair is getting difficult, see if a local hairdresser can visit your home to wash it.

### Next steps

If you need help with any of these tasks, contact your local council for a care needs assessment to see if you're eligible for help or advice (page 6).

Read our guide **More money in your pocket** to see if you can claim extra money towards the costs of paying for help. In Wales, Age Cymru has its own version of this guide.

# Making your home work for you

Sometimes all you need to manage better at home are a few useful bits of equipment. These don't have to be expensive or a big commitment.

## Useful equipment at home

- In the kitchen, kettle tippers, wide-handled cutlery and spike boards allow one-handed vegetable peeling and can help if you find it hard to grip or carry.
- Microwaves can make it very quick and easy to cook or heat up food, and they reduce washing up.
- Raisers can be fitted to beds or chairs, making it easier to get in and out.
- Long-handled shoehorns and gadgets can help with putting on socks or doing up buttons.
- Telephones with large buttons, talking clocks and watches, or raised markings on appliance controls can help if you have sight problems.
- If you have any hearing loss, flashing door bells and smoke alarms can help you know when someone's at the door.
- If you have memory problems, a digital memo reminder can prompt you about your daily tasks, and a calendar clock can show you the day, date and time if you tend to forget.
- If you find it difficult to answer the front door, consider using a key safe. This is a secure box outside your home where you can leave door keys. It has an access code that you can give to trusted relatives, carers or health professionals who need to come in. Only use a police-approved key safe and get it properly installed.



You can buy a lot of these things on the high street or online, or you can contact the Disabled Living Foundation (page 38) to find suppliers. Go to [www.asksara.org.uk](http://www.asksara.org.uk) for a self-help guide to discover which items might help you. Always seek advice before buying anything, as these can be expensive purchases. You'll need to make sure they're right for you and that you're not being overcharged.

Ask your local council for a care needs assessment (page 6). Councils must provide this for you regardless of your income and savings. You may find you're eligible for free equipment (see page 24 for details). Even if you can't get help with the costs, the council should be able to tell you what equipment would help you.

You can also get an assessment from a private occupational therapist who can help you identify ways to stay living independently. Contact the Royal College of Occupational Therapists for a list of private practitioners (page 39).

## Next steps

Visit [www.asksara.org.uk](http://www.asksara.org.uk) for a self-help guide to gadgets or equipment that could help you (page 17).

Read our guide **Adapting your home** and our factsheet **Disability equipment and home adaptations** for more information. Our guide **At home with dementia** has tips for people living with dementia.



## Home adaptations

Sometimes making simple changes to your home is all that's needed to help you live independently and safely. For example, a grab rail at the front door to help you step inside or an entry intercom if it's difficult to answer the door might make a big difference to how you live.

You can also make more substantial changes, such as fitting your home with a stairlift or an accessible shower. If you own your own property, inform your household insurer of any major changes and check that items such as a stairlift are covered. If you rent your home, ask your landlord before making any permanent changes.

Start by contacting the social services department of your local council. Someone will assess your needs to see if you're eligible for help (pages 6–10). If you are, you could qualify for the following:

- In England, an adaptation you need for daily living that costs less than £1,000 – for example, a raised toilet seat, a grab rail or a ramp – and specialist equipment – for example, a special bed or walking frame – are provided free of charge.



- In Wales, your local social services may provide some equipment and adaptations free of charge or you may have to pay a certain amount depending on your income and savings. Alternatively, you may qualify for help under a Rapid Response Adaptation Programme. Contact Care & Repair Cymru to find out more (page 38).

If social services recommend that you need an adaptation that costs more than £1,000, you may be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) to help with the cost.

Local councils can provide additional help with repairs, improvements and adaptations. This help is in addition to a DFG and can be in the form of a loan or grant, equipment or advice.

In England, contact Foundations (page 38) to find out if there's a Home Improvement Agency in your area. It can help you with repairs, improvements or adaptations to your home. For example, it can help you apply for grants, arrange surveys and get estimates. It can also oversee the work while it's being carried out, to make sure it's done to the right specifications for you.

## Next steps



Read our guide **Adapting your home**. For more detailed information read our factsheet **Disability equipment and home adaptations**. In Wales, see Age Cymru's version of this factsheet.

## Using technology to stay safe

If you worry about falling or having an accident when you're home alone but still enjoy living independently, think about using a telecare service. Telecare can also help if you live with someone who is unwell or disabled, or if you've recently come out of hospital and want a little extra support while you're recovering.

Telecare services use simple technology to give you, your family and friends peace of mind that you're safe, while still maintaining your privacy and independence.

Telecare offers support in a variety of ways. The most common example is a personal alarm, which lets you call for help if you're unwell or have a fall and can't reach a telephone. Other examples of telecare include:

- sensors that automatically detect if you've fallen and raise an alert
- fire alarms that flash or vibrate
- plug-in hall lights that turn on when they detect movement, or at a certain time
- gas detectors that can raise an alarm and even shut the gas off completely if it's been left on
- devices that can detect if you've had a seizure
- special plugs for the bath and sink that allow the water to only reach a certain level
- movement sensors that can turn on lights when you get out of bed
- door sensors that detect if someone has left the house alone or left and not returned within a certain time.

Depending on your finances, you may have to pay something towards the cost of telecare. Once social services have carried out a care needs assessment, they will assess your income and savings to see whether you need to contribute. See pages 6-10 to find out more. If you want to buy telecare products privately, contact the Disabled Living Foundation (page 38) for advice. Ask about its lending library, where you can borrow items to see how you get on with them.

Before buying telecare products:

- Make sure you are receiving all the financial help you're entitled to.
- Read customer reviews and check guarantee and return policies in case the product doesn't meet your needs.
- Consider leasing or hiring larger or more expensive products instead of buying them, as your needs may change.

**“My mum’s 96 and has had some sensors installed and now carries a personal alarm. I think it gives us both peace of mind.”**

Nicola, 67



## Next steps

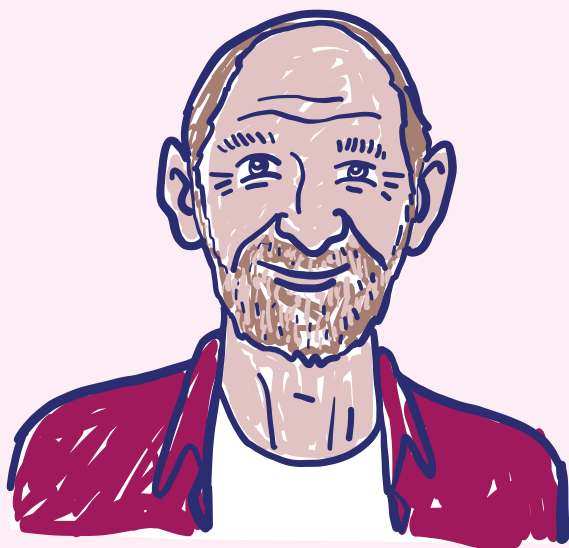
Contact the Disabled Living Foundation (page 38) to find out more about telecare.

## Joseph's care assessment led to him receiving the help he needs.

**Joseph asked for a care assessment after he started to struggle with everyday tasks.**

'In the past few years the everyday things I used to take for granted have started to get more difficult. My fingers don't seem to be able to manage the buttons on my shirt as well as they used to and I have difficulty carrying things. And unless there's someone there to help me, I find it really difficult to get up and down the stairs or cook myself a proper meal.

'My daughter suggested I get a care needs assessment. So I contacted the social services department of my local council to ask about it, and they told me that people can get a care assessment for free.



**“I feel much happier knowing I can start getting my life back on track.”**



‘A few weeks later a social worker came to my house to talk about how I was managing. I told her about the trouble I was having.

‘My daughter was there with me, which was great, as she helped me explain my problems.

‘After the assessment, the social worker agreed a care plan with me. It outlined that I could get a home carer who would come in twice a day to help me dress and prepare my meals. It also said that a stairlift would help me get up and down the stairs more easily.

‘I still need to have a financial assessment to see whether I’ll have to contribute to the costs, but I feel much happier knowing I can start getting my life back on track and stay living at home for as long as possible.’



## Help with finances

If the council decides you're eligible for support or care, you might be happy to use its services, for example, to arrange carers to help you. In many ways this is the easiest way to get help. But if you want more choice and control, there are other options.

### Arranging and paying for your care services

In England, the council must provide you with a personal budget if you're eligible for financial support. This is a budget for arranging and paying for your care and support. The amount of money depends on your needs as set out in your care plan. There are different ways you can manage this money:

- You can get the council to manage it and arrange services for you. The council spends the money on services to meet your needs as chosen by you.
- You can directly receive the money in your personal budget and spend it on any services that meet your needs as set out in your care plan. This is called a direct payment.



Direct payments allow you to be more flexible. You could use them to choose your own carers, people you feel comfortable with and who could visit you regularly, rather than having different carers each time.

You might want to pay someone to help you go shopping, for example. If you have a place of worship, or you want to do a course, you can use the money you've been allocated to get you there. You can use it in a variety of ways, as long as it meets the needs in your care plan.

However, direct payments involve more work for you. You might have to take on the duties of an employer, depending on your support or care needs. You can get support with this from your local council. You can also nominate someone to receive and manage the money for you if you don't feel able to do it yourself.

**“My health’s got worse recently and I can’t keep up with the cleaning anymore. After my assessment I arranged for someone to come in and help once a week.”**

Rhys, 82



## Next steps



Read our factsheet **Personal budgets and direct payments in social care** for more information. In Wales, see Age Cymru's factsheet **Direct payments for community care services in Wales**.



## If you're charged for services

If you've had a financial assessment and the council decides you have to pay towards care services, it must make sure you're left with a reasonable income, known as your 'Minimum Income Guarantee'. Check your local council's website for their charging information. If you think the fee is unreasonable, ask for a review. If you're still not happy, use the council's complaints procedure.



In Wales, there is a maximum charge of £80 per week for care at home but you might be charged less than this depending on your financial assessment.

In some instances, the council can charge extra for certain low-level, low-cost services (such as meals on wheels) on top of the maximum weekly charge. In all instances, the council must make sure you're left with a reasonable income.

### Next steps



Read our factsheet **Paying for care and support at home** for further details. Age Cymru has their own version of this factsheet.

# Arranging your own care and support

If you're paying for your own care and support at home – either privately or through direct payments – there are a number of ways you can find a provider.

## Home care agencies

An agency can provide carers who will support you to live independently at home. They can help you with getting in and out of bed, washing, getting dressed, preparing a meal or collecting medication, for example. The duration and number of visits depends on your needs.

There are several ways to find a home care agency:

- Ask your local council for a list of agencies. It must give you information and advice even if it isn't providing other services for you.
- Contact the UK Home Care Association (page 40) for details of home care agencies that follow its code of practice. It produces a leaflet called **Choosing care at home**.
- Contact the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the national regulator for care services, for a list of agencies and its inspection reports (page 37). You can also access these reports on the CQC website. In Wales, contact the Care Services Inspectorate Wales (page 37).
- Search online or check your phone book.
- Ask friends, relatives or neighbours about their experiences with local agencies. Remember that while a personal recommendation is a good starting point, agencies can change and what suits one person may not suit another.

Ask agencies to send you a brochure and their price list or look for one on their website. Customer reviews can be useful but you should always contact the agencies you like to see if they're right for you.

You may want to ask:

- whether they have cared for anyone with similar needs to yours
- what training their care workers receive
- whether the agency ensures that all staff have been checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is a check on someone's criminal record, formerly called a CRB check.
- what happens if a regular worker is off sick or on holiday
- how to contact the agency in an emergency
- whether they charge extra for evenings or weekends
- how to make a complaint.

There may be other questions you would like to ask. Think about what's important to you.

If you're arranging your own care and have not involved the local council, your chosen agency will carry out its own care needs assessment to find out what help you need. It should produce a care plan showing your carer's arrival times, what they'll do, how long they'll stay and any other relevant information. This should be reviewed every year, or more often if your needs change.

## Employing someone directly

Instead of using an agency, you may prefer to employ someone directly to help you. If you do this, you'll need to handle their tax, National Insurance and pension. Skills for Care has useful resources for employing someone directly you can visit [www.employingpersonalassistants.co.uk](http://www.employingpersonalassistants.co.uk). You must make sure you're insured in case your carer has an accident, and that they've had a DBS check. The DBS can tell you how to go about this (page 37).

You can't generally use direct payments to employ a partner or relative who lives with you, but if there is no alternative and the council agrees then you might be able to. Think about how employing a partner or relative could affect your relationship, and check whether becoming a paid carer affects their eligibility for benefits.





## How much will it cost?

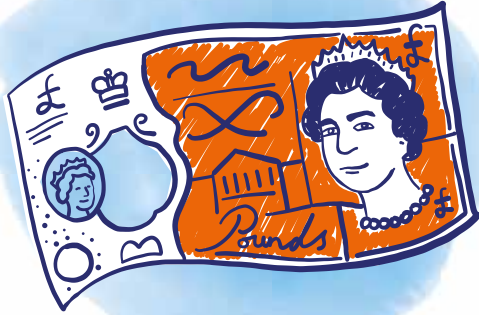
Home care costs can vary depending on where you live, the sort of care you need, how many hours of care you need and what times of the day and week you need it. If you're a self-funder, it's worth looking at a number of providers to get a better idea of the price range.

Even if the council isn't paying for your care, it can help with information and advice about local care services. This will give you an idea of the cost of care and the range of providers in your area. Self-funders also have the right to a needs assessment from their local council and the assessment can help you find and plan appropriate care.

While cost is important, it needs to be weighed against the quality of the care offered. You can contact the CQC to see how a care provider is performing (page 37).

## Next steps

Read our factsheet **Finding help at home** for more information. In Wales, contact Age Cymru for its version of this factsheet. Independent Age produces a guide called **Getting care services at home** (page 38).



## Extra money if you're disabled

If you have a long-term illness or disability and need help with personal care, you might be able to claim Attendance Allowance (AA). You can use AA to pay for anything – it doesn't have to be spent on care or carers, although many people use it in that way.

You can claim AA if you:

- are State Pension age or older (if you're under State Pension age you must apply for Personal Independence Payment instead)
- require help with personal care, such as getting washed or dressed, or supervision to keep you safe. You don't have to actually get this help – AA is based on the help you need, not the help you actually get
- have a disability or long-term illness, including sight or hearing impairments, or a condition such as dementia
- have needed help for at least six months (there are special rules if you're terminally ill).

AA isn't means-tested, so it doesn't matter how much income or savings you have. It has a lower rate and a higher rate depending on how much help you need, and whether you need help in the day or night, or both.

If you qualify for AA, you could also be entitled to increased means-tested benefits such as Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support (Council Tax Reduction in Wales) or Pension Credit – Guarantee Credit. If you receive services from your local council, AA is taken into account when working out whether you should pay for them.

## Next steps



Call the Attendance Allowance helpline (page 37) for an application form, or visit [www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance) to make a claim online. For more information and tips on filling out the form, see our guide **Attendance Allowance**. Your local Age UK might also be able to help you.

If you're under State Pension age, read our factsheet **Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance**.

To find out whether you're eligible for other benefits too, read our guide **More money in your pocket**. In Wales, Age Cymru has their own version of this guide. You can use our online benefits calculator at [www.ageuk.org.uk/benefits-check](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/benefits-check) or visit your local Age UK for a benefits check.





## If things aren't working out

It's vital that you're comfortable with the care you receive, and feel confident it's right for you.

### What should I do if I'm not happy with the care I'm receiving?

If you're unhappy with your care, first try to resolve it by having an informal conversation with your local council or care agency. If that doesn't work, ask for a copy of their complaints procedure, which they are required to have, and make a formal complaint.

If you're not happy with the outcome of the complaints procedure, ask the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman to investigate.



In Wales, contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (page 39).

You can tell the regulatory organisation in your nation about your complaint: the Care Quality Commission in England or the Care Inspectorate Wales (page 37).

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. If you feel you've been discriminated against because of your age, race, sexual orientation or gender, contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service (page 38). If you experience abuse from anyone who cares for you, contact the local council immediately. They must take action in response to what you tell them.

If someone lacks mental capacity, for example if they have dementia, there are strict safeguards in place to protect them.



When we talk about 'mental capacity', we mean that someone has the ability to make, understand and express their decisions.

The safeguards simply mean that reasonable attempts must be made to find out what the person wants. For instance, someone with dementia may be more lucid and find it easier to communicate in the mornings, so they should be asked about their wishes then. This is in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

## Next steps



Read our factsheet **How to resolve problems and complain about social care** for more information. In Wales, see Age Cymru's factsheet **Social care assessments for older people with care needs in Wales**. For face-to-face advice, contact your local Age UK or Citizens Advice (page 37).

## What if I need more help at home?

You may start to feel you need more support at home. You might not be as mobile or have as much energy as you once did, and your needs may change. If this happens, you can always ask your local council to review your needs. They'll see if they can provide any additional services, or whether you're now eligible for help you haven't had before. If you're receiving direct payments, this review may result in an increase in funding.

If you're employing your own carers, see if you can afford to employ them for a few extra hours. Talk to the agency (if you're using one) to see what it can offer.

There may come a time when your current home is no longer suitable, even with care, support or adaptations. If this happens, the options you could consider include:

- downsizing to a more manageable property
- moving in with family
- moving into sheltered housing
- moving into a care home.

It can be understandably difficult to think about leaving your home, especially if you've lived there a long time, but it's a good idea to consider your options and discuss them with friends and family well in advance. You can then be sure you've made your wishes known and thought about what's best for you.

### Next steps

Read our guides **Housing options** and **Care homes** for more information about your options.

# 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](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

In Wales, contact Age Cymru: **0800 022 3444**

**[www.agecymru.org.uk](http://www.agecymru.org.uk)**

In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI: **0808 808 7575**

**[www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)**

In Scotland, contact Age Scotland: **0800 124 4222**

**[www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)**

## Attendance Allowance helpline

Tel: **0800 731 0122**

Textphone: **0800 731 0317**

**[www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance](http://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance)**

## Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)

The national regulatory body of social care services in Wales.

Can provide lists of home care providers for a specific area.

Tel: **0300 7900 126**

**[www.careinspectorate.wales](http://www.careinspectorate.wales)**

## Care Quality Commission (CQC)

National independent regulator of all health and social care services in England. Can provide lists of home care providers for a specific area.

Tel: **03000 61 61 61**

**[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)**

## Citizens Advice

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

In Wales, there is a national phone advice service on **0344 477 2020**. It is available in some parts of England on **0344 411 1444**.

For online information and to find details of your nearest Citizens Advice in England or Wales: **[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

## Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Can check the criminal record of someone you're considering employing as a carer.

Tel: **0300 020 0190**

Textphone: **0300 020 0192**

**[www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)**

## **Disabled Living Foundation (DLF)**

Runs an equipment demonstration centre and provides information about equipment for daily living. Also provides a self-help guide to finding suitable equipment.

**[www.asksara.org.uk](http://www.asksara.org.uk)**

**Tel: 0300 999 0004**

**[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)**

## **Equality Advisory and Support Service**

Advises and helps people on issues related to equality and human rights.

**Tel: 0808 800 0082**

**Textphone: 0808 800 0084**

**[www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)**

## **Foundations**

National body for Home Improvement Agencies (HIAs), with a website you can use to find your nearest one in England.

**Tel: 0300 124 0315**

**[www.foundations.uk.com](http://www.foundations.uk.com)**

In Wales, contact Care & Repair Cymru

**Tel: 0300 111 3333**

**[www.careandrepair.org.uk](http://www.careandrepair.org.uk)**

## **Independent Age**

Provides advice and support for older people, their families and carers.

**Tel: 0800 319 6789**

**[www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)**

## **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

Investigates complaints about adult social care providers in England.

Tel: **0300 061 0614**

**[www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)**

## **Online Centres Network**

Can help you learn about computers and the internet at a local centre.

Tel: **0114 349 1666**

**[www.onlinecentresnetwork.org](http://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org)**

## **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

Investigates whether people have been treated unfairly or have received poor service through a public body, such as a local authority. The Ombudsman can also help people who fully fund their own social care services.

Tel: **0300 790 0203**

**[www.ombudsman.wales](http://www.ombudsman.wales)**

## **RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)**

Provides services, advice and information to people who are visually impaired or blind.

Tel: **0303 123 9999**

**[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)**

## **Royal College of Occupational Therapists**

Can help you find an independent occupational therapist in your area.

Tel: **020 3141 4600**

**[www.rcot.co.uk](http://www.rcot.co.uk)**

## **Royal Voluntary Service**

Offers a range of services, including home visits, help with shopping and other tasks, community transport, meals delivered to the home and social clubs.

Tel: **0330 555 0310**

**[www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk](http://www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk)**

## **The College of Podiatry**

Can help you find chiropodists and podiatrists in your area.

Tel: **020 7234 8620**

**[www.cop.org.uk](http://www.cop.org.uk)**

## **Thrive**

Provides information and guidance on how to make gardening easier and more enjoyable.

Tel: **0118 988 5688**

**[www.thrive.org.uk](http://www.thrive.org.uk)**

## **TrustMark**

Helps people find a reliable, trustworthy tradesperson.

Tel: **0333 555 1234**

**[www.trustmark.org.uk](http://www.trustmark.org.uk)**

## **UK Home Care Association**

Provides information on choosing care and finding a home care agency.

Tel: **020 8661 8188**

**[www.ukhca.co.uk](http://www.ukhca.co.uk)**





# Can you help Age UK?



If you would like to, please complete the donation form below with a gift and return to: **Freepost Age UK REPLY**. Alternatively, you can phone **0800 169 87 87** or visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate)**. If you prefer, you can donate directly to one of our national or local partners. Thank you.

## Your details

AGUK0081 MXAQ-19CA05-C014

Title:  Forename:  Surname:

Home address:

Postcode:

We'd<sup>†</sup> like to let you know about the vital work we do for older people, our fundraising appeals and opportunities to support us, as well as the Age UK products and services you can buy. We will never sell your data and we promise to keep your details safe and secure.

**I do not wish** to receive communications by post.

You can change your mind at any time by phoning **0800 169 87 87** or writing to Supporter Services at the registered address below.

For further details on how your data is used and stored:

**[www.ageuk.org.uk/help/privacy-policy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/help/privacy-policy)**

## Your gift

I would like to make a gift of £:

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

Card payment I wish to pay by (please tick):

MasterCard  Visa  CAF CharityCard  Maestro

Card number  Expiry date

Signature

**Gift Aid declaration**  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 am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or capital gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. Today's date  \* Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI. **Please ensure you provide your full name and address**, and let us know if you wish to cancel your declaration, or if your tax status, name or address changes.

<sup>†</sup> We, includes the charity, its charitable and trading subsidiaries, and national charities (Age Cymru, Age Scotland and Age NI). Age UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (registered charity number 1128267 and registered company number 6825798). The registered address is Tavis House, 1-6 Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9NA. **Age UK provides a range of services and your gift will go wherever the need is the greatest.**

# Help us be there for someone else

We hope you found this guide helpful. When times are tough, it's so important to get some support. Did you know you could help us reach someone else who needs a little help? Here's how:

1

## Give your views on guides like this

Our Readers' Panel helps make sure the information we produce is right for older people and their families. We'd love you to join. Go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/publications/readers-panel](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/publications/readers-panel).

2

## Donate to us

Every donation we receive helps us be there for someone when they need us. To make a donation, call us on **0800 169 8787** or go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate).

3

## Volunteer with us

Our volunteers make an incredible difference to people's lives. Get involved by contacting your local Age UK or at [www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer).

4

## Campaign with us

We campaign to make life better for older people, and rely on the help of our strong network of campaigners. Add your voice to our latest campaigns at [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns).

5

## Remember us in your will

A gift to Age UK in your will is a very special way of helping older people get expert support in the years to come. Find out more by calling **020 3033 1421** or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy).

# What should I do now?

You may want to read some of our other relevant guides, such as:

- **Adapting your home**
- **Housing options**
- **Care homes**

You can order any of our guides or factsheets by giving our Advice Line a ring for free on **0800 169 65 65** (8am-7pm, 365 days a year).

Our friendly advisers will also be able to help answer any questions you have about anything you've read.

All of our publications are available in large print and audio formats.

There's plenty of really useful information on our website, too. Visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk/home-and-care](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/home-and-care)** to get started.

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



**0800 169 65 65**  
**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**



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