FREE PRINTABLE CHECKLIST FROM MOBILE PHYSIOTHERAPIST UK

Getting moving again after a hospital stay

Leaving hospital and the first 14 days at home, with local help in Hertfordshire

For adults in Hertfordshire, their families, carers and anyone helping them at home. This edition adds a list of local help in Hertfordshire.

Your own care plan comes first. Follow the advice your hospital or care team gave you, including anything you must not do, and any advice about walking, exercise, eating or drinking. Use any equipment and help you were advised to use.

This is a checklist and a diary. It is not an exercise programme, and it is not a deadline for getting better.

When to get medical help: page 4. My 14-day record: page 5.

Before you leave hospital

Tick each one when it is sorted. Ask the ward team about anything you are unsure of.

- [ ] My journey home is arranged, and I can get into my home.
- [ ] Anyone helping me knows when I am coming home. Any care visits are confirmed.
- [ ] I have my discharge letter or care plan, and I understand the next steps.
- [ ] I know which of my medicines have changed, and how and when to take each one.
- [ ] I have the medicines I need, and I know how to get more before they run out.
- [ ] Any equipment I need is ready, and I have practised using it.
- [ ] I know what help I need with my bed, chair, toilet and any stairs.
- [ ] Any exercises, and anything I must not do, have been explained and written down.
- [ ] Food and drinks are sorted for when I get home.
- [ ] If I have been in hospital for a while, someone will put the heating on before I get home, so the house is warm when I arrive.
- [ ] If I have a personal alarm or falls sensor, it is charged and working.
- [ ] I know about any follow-up appointments, and who to call if there is a problem.
- [ ] I have talked about my worries, and asked whether short-term help at home would be useful.

My useful contacts

Hospital ward or discharge team, and phone:

GP surgery and phone:

Community or home care team and phone, if arranged:

Equipment contact and phone:

Follow-up appointment: date, time and place:

At home: little and often

Follow the advice from your own healthcare team first. Some of the points below may not be right for you, or may need changing. This is a general guide. If you are not sure something is safe for you, check with your healthcare team before you try it.

- Take it easy on your first day home. Getting home from hospital can be very tiring.
- Get dressed and sit out of bed for meals when you can, with help if you need it.
- Try not to sit or lie still for long spells. Move about in the way your care team advised, and walk only when it is safe, with your walking aid and any help you need.
- Do the exercises you were given, the way you were shown.
- Spread things out through the day and rest in between. Build up gradually. You do not have to do more every day.
- Have regular meals and drinks, following any advice you were given about diet, swallowing or how much to drink.
- If something new starts, or something gets worse, do not push through it. Ask for advice, and use the “When to get medical help” page.

Things I must not do, or help I need:

Something I would like to work towards, with my care team:

Making home safer

- Keep the places you walk clear of clutter, cables and loose rugs.
- Light the way to the toilet at night.
- Wear shoes or slippers that stay on securely and grip the floor.
- Put your personal alarm or falls sensor back on when you get home, and keep it charged. Keep your phone within reach.
- Use your walking aid as you were shown, and take your time getting up.
- Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower, and any equipment recommended for you.
- Get help with lifting, reaching and heavy jobs.

Ask your GP or pharmacist whether any of your medicines could affect your balance. Do not change or stop a medicine without advice.

Where to get help in England and Wales

Short-term help at home. Ask the ward before you leave, or your GP surgery or council once you are home. You may be assessed for short-term care, often called reablement or intermediate care. When it is offered it is free, and it usually lasts no more than 6 weeks, depending on your needs.

Equipment and changes to your home. Your council’s adult social care team can tell you how to ask for an assessment.

Worried about how you left hospital. Speak to the hospital team, or its patient advice service (PALS in England, the concerns team in Wales). For an urgent medical problem, use the “When to get medical help” page instead.

Local help in Hertfordshire

These services cover all of Hertfordshire. If you are not sure who to ask, call HertsHelp first.

Hertfordshire County Council adult social care. Ask for an assessment for care and support at home. Call 0300 123 4042, Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm. There is an out of hours service for emergencies. To report a worry about an adult, you can call the same number day or night. hertfordshire.gov.uk

HertsHelp. The council's free, independent advice service. They can find local help, and help you plan for a hospital stay, such as care for a pet or paying bills. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9am to 5pm, Wednesday 9am to 7pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm. Or text hertshelp to 60060. **0300 123 4044** · hertshelp.net

Short-term help to get back on your feet. The council has social care teams in all NHS hospitals. Ask to speak to them before you go home. They may suggest equipment, meals, home visits to help you do things for yourself again, or help to settle in. You might have to pay towards some of these.

Help when you get home from hospital. Age UK Hertfordshire's Hospital and Community Navigation Service helps if you have just left hospital. It can help with food and shopping for a short time, visits at home, collecting prescriptions, and arranging a pendant alarm or fire safety check. Free. Contact it through HertsHelp. Reach Out volunteers can also visit you for company and small jobs: ask the ward staff or HertsHelp to refer you. **0300 123 4044**

Equipment. After an assessment, equipment can be lent free of charge by Hertfordshire Equipment Service. For a walking aid, ask your GP. For repairs, returns or questions about equipment you already have, call Hertfordshire Equipment Service. **01707 292555**

Falls and strength classes. If you have a fall, tell your GP or a health professional as soon as you can. Stevenage FC Foundation runs strength and balance classes in towns across Hertfordshire. Call 01438 222 222 to book. HertsHelp can also find local exercise classes. stevenagefcfoundation.com

Personal alarms (Herts Careline). An alarm you wear on your neck or wrist. Press it if you fall or feel unwell, and the control room answers 24 hours a day. There is a charge. **0300 999 2999** · care-line.co.uk

Carers in Hertfordshire. Information, advice and support for family and friends who care. Monday to Thursday 9am to 5.30pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm. **01992 58 69 69** · carersinherts.org.uk

Home fire safety visit. Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service gives free home fire safety visits to people more at risk of fire, such as older people, people who live alone, or people with mobility or health needs. Start with the online home fire safety self-check on the county council website.

Age UK Hertfordshire. Free information and advice for older people and their families. Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. **0300 345 3446** · ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire

Healthwatch Hertfordshire. Help finding health and care services, and help if you want to give feedback or make a complaint. **01707 275978** · healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk

Hospital patient advice (PALS). Lister, New QEII and Hertford County hospitals: 01438 285811, leave a message. Monday to Friday, 9am to 12 noon and 1pm to 3pm. Watford General, St Albans City and Hemel Hempstead hospitals: 01923 217198, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm.

Local contacts checked 2 November 2026. Services can change, so check before you rely on one.

When to get medical help

This is not a full list. Follow any extra advice in your discharge paperwork.

Call 999 now if you have

- Sudden chest pain or discomfort that does not go away, pain that spreads to your arm, neck, jaw or back, or chest pain with sweating, feeling sick, light-headed or short of breath.
- Severe difficulty breathing: gasping, choking or not able to get your words out.
- Pain and swelling in a leg together with chest pain or breathlessness. This can be a blood clot.
- Your face droops on one side, you cannot lift both arms, or your speech is slurred or muddled. These can be signs of a stroke. Call even if they stop.
- You have fallen and cannot get up, or you may have hurt your head, neck, back or hip.
- Bleeding that you cannot stop, for example from a wound or where you had stitches.

Do not drive yourself to A&E.

Call NHS 111, or get an urgent GP appointment, if you have

- New pain and swelling in one leg, sometimes with red or darker skin. This can be a blood clot.
- Breathlessness that comes on suddenly, or being more short of breath than usual.
- Coughing up blood.
- A wound or stitches that open up, or a wound that is bleeding, red, swollen, more painful or has pus coming out of it.
- You have fallen and are in pain, hurt or feeling unwell, but none of the 999 signs apply.

If any 999 sign applies, call 999 first.

Contact your GP or care team if

- You are worried about your walking or balance.
- You have had a fall, even if you were not hurt.
- Everyday things are getting harder to manage. Ask early. Do not wait for the diary to finish.

If you fall and cannot get up

- Call 999, or use your personal alarm. If you cannot reach either, shout or bang on the wall or floor.
- Keep warm. Cover yourself with anything within reach.
- Do not force yourself to get up. Follow the call handler’s advice about moving while you wait.
- Anyone with you should not try to lift you.

My 14-day record

Start on your first day at home. Tick the things that were right for you and that you managed, with help if needed. Write “n/a” where something does not apply. This is a record, not a test.

The days do not have to look the same. If something new starts or you are clearly getting worse, use the “When to get medical help” page rather than waiting for the diary to finish.

Keep this record and take it to any follow-up appointments.

Day	Date	Got dressed	Sat out for meals	Movement as advised	Exercises as advised	How I felt, or things to ask about
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						

General information, not a personal treatment plan. Follow your own discharge advice. Prepared by Mobile Physiotherapist UK from NHS guidance. Sources checked 20 October 2026. General guidance checked by Claire Williamson, Chartered Physiotherapist, 27 October 2026. Hertfordshire contacts checked 2 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share.