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Getting moving again after a hospital stay

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

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

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 8. My 14-day record: page 10.

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 Staffordshire

Staffordshire has two councils for social care. Staffordshire County Council covers most of the county, including Stafford, Lichfield, Burton, Tamworth, Cannock and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Stoke-on-Trent City Council covers the city of Stoke-on-Trent. Each line says which area it is for. Some NHS and charity services cover both.

Staffordshire County Council adult social care. For people in the Staffordshire County Council area, outside Stoke-on-Trent. Call Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. You can also ask for help online. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0345 604 2886. staffordshire.gov.uk

Stoke-on-Trent City Council adult social care. For people in Stoke-on-Trent. Call 0800 561 0015, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. You can also ask for help online. Out of hours, for emergencies: 01782 234234. stoke.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Short-term help after a hospital stay. Ask the ward staff about help at home before you leave. Staffordshire County Council area: reablement is short-term help at home to get your skills and confidence back after a hospital stay. It usually lasts up to 6 weeks, and it is free for up to 6 weeks. Ask Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010. Stoke-on-Trent: the hospital occupational therapist looks at what you need to get home. After you are home, your GP can refer you to the NHS community occupational therapy team.

Equipment. Staffordshire County Council area: ask Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010. Equipment and small changes to your home are usually free if you are eligible for care and support. Stoke-on-Trent: ask on 0800 561 0015 or online. The assessment is free, and equipment is usually lent free from

the council's store. In both areas you can use AskSARA online to find simple equipment that may help.

Falls. If you have had a fall, tell your GP. Staffordshire County Council area: find local falls prevention classes on Staffordshire Connects (staffordshireconnects.info). Stoke-on-Trent: ask your GP to refer you to the Specialist Falls Team. Anyone can do the NHS-approved Falls Assistant check online. fallsassistant.org.uk

Personal alarms. A button you wear and press for help, day or night. Staffordshire County Council area: the council does not run its own alarms, and they are not free. Find a provider on Staffordshire Connects. Stoke-on-Trent: the council's Lifeline alarm service can send a responder if you fall. There is a charge. Call 01782 234545.

Help for carers. Staffordshire County Council area: Staffordshire Together for Carers gives free advice and support. Call 0300 303 0621. A carer's assessment is free: ask Staffordshire Cares on 0300 111 8010. Stoke-on-Trent: North Staffs Carers runs the carers' support service. Call 01782 793100, Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm, and Saturday and Sunday 9am to 12 noon. A carer's assessment is free: ask the council on 0800 561 0015.

Home Fire Safety Visit. Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service covers Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Call to find out if you can have a home visit, or do the free online Home Fire Safety Check. **0800 0241 999** · staffordshirefire.gov.uk

Citizens Advice. Help with money, benefits and other problems. The national Adviceline puts you through to your local Citizens Advice. It is usually open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. **0800 144 8848** · citizensadvice.org.uk

Healthwatch. Tell them about your health or care, good or bad, to help services improve. Healthwatch Staffordshire:

healthwatchstaffordshire.co.uk. Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent: 03303 130247, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Hospital patient advice (PALS). Royal Stoke University Hospital and County Hospital, Stafford: 01782 676450. Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am to 4pm, and Thursday 9am to 1pm. Queen's Hospital Burton, Samuel Johnson Community Hospital in Lichfield and Sir Robert Peel Community Hospital in Tamworth: 01332 785156, Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm.

Local contacts checked 16 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						

My 14-day record (continued)

Day	Date	Got dressed	Sat out for meals	Movement as advised	Exercises as advised	How I felt, or things to ask about
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. Staffordshire contacts checked 16 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share.