Help to manage at home

Where to get help when everyday things are getting harder: assessments, help at home, equipment, alarms and money, with local help in Hampshire

For adults who are finding everyday things harder at home, and their family and friends. This edition adds a list of local help in Hampshire.

You do not have to wait for a crisis. If washing, dressing, cooking, getting about or staying safe at home is getting harder, you can ask for help now. This guide is general information. It is not advice about your own situation.

Ask your council for a free needs assessment

- Anyone can ask for one, for themselves or for someone they know. It is free. Contact adult social services at your local council, by phone or online.
- Someone from the council, such as a social worker or occupational therapist, looks at how you manage everyday things like washing, dressing and cooking. It can be at home, by phone or online.
- Tell them about everything you find hard, even small things. If you leave things out, you may be offered less help.
- It can help to have a friend or relative with you.
- If you do not qualify for help, the council should still give you free advice about support in your area.

- If you disagree with the result, you can complain to the council.

Help that may follow

- Equipment, such as a walking frame or a personal alarm.
- Changes to your home, such as grab rails or a walk-in shower.
- Paid carers who visit you at home.
- Day centres and lunch clubs.
- Equipment and small changes to your home are free if you are assessed as needing them.
- You will usually be asked to pay towards the cost of care. A financial assessment works out whether the council will help pay.

Equipment and changes to your home

- Small things can make a big difference: a raised toilet seat, a non-slip mat in the bath or shower, a grab rail by the bed, or a kettle holder for easier pouring.
- Ask the council for a home assessment. An occupational therapist visits and watches what you find hard. It is free.
- The council should pay for each adaptation that costs less than £1,000, such as grab rails or a small ramp.
- For bigger work, such as a stairlift, a level-access shower or wider doors, you may be able to get a Disabled Facilities Grant from your council. It does not affect your benefits.
- You can often hire equipment first, to see if it suits you before you buy it.

Personal alarms and key safes

- A personal alarm lets you get help if you fall or have a problem at home. You wear it on your wrist or round your neck.
- Some are linked to a monitoring service that answers 24 hours a day. Some have fall detectors.
- A key safe is a small locked box on an outside wall that holds a key. Family, carers or the emergency services can open it with a code if you cannot get to the door.
- Costs vary. Monitored alarms usually have a set-up charge and then a monthly charge. Ask adult social services what your council offers.

Money help

- If you are over State Pension age and need help looking after yourself because of an illness or disability, you may be able to get Attendance Allowance. You do not need to have a carer to claim. Check on GOV.UK. In Scotland it is called Pension Age Disability Payment.
- Getting Attendance Allowance may mean you can also get extra Pension Credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction.
- If someone cares for you for at least 35 hours a week, they may be able to get Carer's Allowance.

Staying safe and keeping in touch

- Keep floors clear of clutter, loose wires and rugs. Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower.
- If you think a medicine is affecting your balance, speak to your GP or pharmacist.

- Activities that improve strength and balance, done at least twice a week, help prevent falls. Our free sheet of simple exercises is at mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/balance-exercises.
- If you feel lonely, keep in touch by phone or video call, or join a local group or class.
- Ask your GP about social prescribing. A link worker can help you find local support and activities.
- Age UK, The Silver Line and Re-engage offer support and befriending.

Get help quickly

- If you need help urgently, but it is not an emergency, call NHS 111.
- If you or someone else needs help right now, call 999.

If you fall and cannot get up, or may have hurt your head, neck, back or hip, call 999.

More free guides

Looking after someone? Our free guide for carers: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/carers-guide/hampshire. Coming home from hospital? Our free hospital checklist: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/after-hospital-checklist/hampshire.

Local help in Hampshire

Hampshire has three councils. Hampshire County Council covers the county outside Southampton and Portsmouth. Southampton and Portsmouth each have their own city council. Each line says which area it is for.

Hampshire County Council adult social care. For people in the county, outside Southampton and Portsmouth. Ask for help or an assessment using the online form. The council does not give out walking sticks, frames, wheelchairs or pressure cushions: ask your GP surgery about these. hants.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Southampton City Council adult social care. For people in Southampton city. Call 023 8083 3003. Out of hours, for emergencies only: 0300 555 1373. southampton.gov.uk/adult-social-care

Portsmouth City Council adult social care. For people in Portsmouth city. Call the helpdesk on 023 9268 0810, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. Out of hours, for urgent help: 0300 555 1373. portsmouth.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care

Short-term help to get back on your feet. All three councils have a reablement team to help you do things for yourself again after a hospital stay. Ask the ward staff before you leave. In the county and in Portsmouth it is free for up to six weeks. In Southampton the team visits between 6.30am and 10pm, every day.

Equipment. Equipment is lent after an assessment. County: Hampshire Equipment Service 01256 476800, for repairs or collection. Southampton: Millbrook Healthcare 0333 2408335,

option 3. Portsmouth: Millbrook Healthcare 0333 240 8334. In Portsmouth it is free.

Falls (county). Steady and Strong classes help people over 65 with strength and balance. Call 0370 779 0106. If you have had a fall in the last three months, ask your GP about NHS falls services.

Personal alarms. County: ask Hampshire County Council about care technology, such as alarms linked to help 24 hours a day. Southampton: Careline 03332 079937. Portsmouth: Safe at Home, for PO1 to PO6 postcodes or Portsmouth council tax payers.

Help for carers. County: Princess Royal Trust for Carers 01264 311680. Southampton: Unpaid Carers Support Southampton 023 8083 2253, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Portsmouth: Portsmouth Carers Service, at the Portsmouth Carers Centre in Southsea. carercentre.com

Home Fire Safety Visit. A free visit from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service for people who qualify, for example if you are over 65. It includes advice on preventing falls. Ask online. hantsfire.gov.uk

Age UK. Age UK Portsmouth 023 9286 2121, Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 4.15pm, Friday 8.45am to 3.45pm. Age UK Southampton advice line 023 8036 8636, Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm (SO14 to SO19).

Healthwatch. Help finding services, and a place to tell someone about your care. Hampshire 01962 440 262, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Southampton 023 8021 6018. Portsmouth 023 9354 1510, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm.

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

General information, not advice about your own situation. Prepared by Mobile Physiotherapist UK from NHS and GOV.UK guidance. Sources checked 2 November 2026. Free to print, copy and share. Local contacts checked 2 November 2026.