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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 Merseyside

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

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/merseyside. Coming home from hospital? Our free hospital checklist: mobilephysiotherapist.co.uk/after-hospital-checklist/merseyside.

Local help in Merseyside

Merseyside has five councils: Liverpool, Sefton, Knowsley, St Helens and Wirral. Each line says which area it is for. Some NHS and charity services cover more than one area.

Liverpool City Council adult social care. For people in Liverpool. Call the adult social care phone line on 0151 459 2606, or ask for an assessment online. Family can ask for you. liverpool.gov.uk

Sefton Council adult social care. For people in Sefton, including Southport, Formby, Crosby and Bootle. Call 0345 140 0845, Monday to Thursday 9am to 5.30pm, Friday 9am to 5pm. sefton.gov.uk

Knowsley Council adult social care. For people in Knowsley, including Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot. Call the Front Door Team on 0151 443 2600. If you are worried about someone's safety right now, this number is answered 24 hours a day. knowsley.gov.uk

St Helens Borough Council adult social care. For people in St Helens or with a St Helens GP. Call Contact Cares on 01744 676767, 8am to 10pm, every day. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0345 0500 148. sthelens.gov.uk

Wirral Council adult social care. For people in Wirral. Call the Central Advice and Duty Team on 0151 606 2006, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0151 677 6557. wirral.gov.uk

Equipment. Equipment is lent after an assessment, often by an occupational therapist. Ask your council. Sefton: there is no charge for small aids and adaptations. Knowsley: equipment and small changes such as grab rails are free. You can try equipment at the Centre for Independent Living, Monday to

Friday 9am to 4pm, Saturday 10am to 1pm. Wirral: if you are eligible, equipment and small changes to your home are free.

Falls. Knowsley: the IKAN team helps people over 55 to stay steady. They can visit you at home, bring simple aids and run chair-based exercise. Call 0800 694 0270. St Helens: Contact Cares can help with falls prevention on 01744 676767.

Personal alarms. Liverpool: if you have an assessment, the alarm is free and so is the monitoring at the moment. A mobile response service costs extra. Knowsley: Lifeline alarm equipment is free, with a small weekly charge for monitoring. You can try it free for 12 weeks at the moment. Call 03333 204999. Sefton: ask adult social care about Careline. St Helens: ask Contact Cares about Careline.

Help for carers. Liverpool Carers Centre: 0151 705 2307, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Sefton Carers Centre: 0151 288 6060. A carer's assessment in Sefton is free. Knowsley Carers Hub, for carers aged 18 or over: 0151 549 1412. St Helens Carers Centre: 01744 675 615, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm, and until 8pm on Tuesdays. Wirral: ask for a carer's assessment on 0151 606 2006.

Home Fire Safety Check. Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service gives free fire safety advice and can visit your home. Many people over 65 can have free smoke alarms fitted. You can ask for yourself, a neighbour or a relative. **0800 731 5958** · merseyfire.gov.uk

Age UK and Age Concern. Liverpool and Sefton: Age Concern Liverpool and Sefton helps people aged 50 or over. Call 0151 330 5678. Wirral: Age UK Wirral, Liverpool and Sefton gives free information and advice to adults living in Wirral. Call 0151 482 3456. St Helens: Age UK Mid Mersey runs groups and activities. Call 0300 003 1992.

Citizens Advice. Free help with money, benefits and other problems. Liverpool: freephone 0808 278 7840, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Knowsley and St Helens: 0808 278 7839. Wirral: freephone 0808 278 7848, Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm. Sefton: find your local office at citizensadvice.org.uk.

Healthwatch. Independent help finding health and care services, and a place to say how your care went. Liverpool: 0300 77 77 007. Sefton: freephone 0800 206 1304. Knowsley: 0151 449 3954. St Helens: 0300 111 0007. Wirral: 0151 230 8957.

Local contacts checked 16 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 16 November 2026.