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 North Yorkshire

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

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

Local help in North Yorkshire

North Yorkshire has two councils. North Yorkshire Council covers most of the county, including Harrogate, Scarborough, Northallerton, Selby and Skipton. City of York Council covers York. Use the number for the council where you live. Some services may charge.

Adult social care: your council. North Yorkshire Council: 0300 131 2131. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 5pm, Wednesday 9.30am to 5pm, Friday 9am to 4.30pm. City of York Council: 01904 555111, Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. You can also ask for help online on both councils' websites.

Out of hours, emergencies only. North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council both use 0300 131 2131. Call it for urgent social care problems that cannot wait until the next working day. If someone is in danger, call 999.

Equipment. North Yorkshire: Medequip lends equipment after an assessment by an occupational therapist. Ask your GP, or ask before you leave hospital. Medequip will collect equipment you no longer need, for free: 01423 226240. York: ask the council for a free occupational therapy assessment on 01904 555111. Be Independent lends simple aids: 01904 645000.

Personal alarms. A button you wear to call for help, 24 hours a day. North Yorkshire Council arranges Lifeline alarms after an assessment, or you can pay Medequip Connect yourself: 0800 910 1390. York: Be Independent, 01904 645000. There is a charge for both.

Help with falls. York: the council offers free home safety visits to help stop falls. Call 01904 552300 or ask online. Harrogate area: ask your GP to refer you to the Falls Prevention Service at

Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust. Elsewhere, ask your GP to refer you to the local falls team.

Help for carers. Carers' Resource (Harrogate, Selby and Craven): Harrogate 01423 500555, Skipton 01756 700888. Carers Plus Yorkshire: Northallerton 01609 780872 (Hambleton and Richmondshire), Snainton 01723 850155 (Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale). York Carers Centre: 01904 715490. North Yorkshire Council also offers a free carer assessment online or on 0300 131 2131.

Home Fire Safety Visit. North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue covers all of North Yorkshire and York. Start with the online home fire safety check. If you are at higher risk of fire, they will offer a visit. Questions: 01609 780150. northyorksfire.gov.uk/your-safety/book-a-visit

Age UK York: Independent Living Service. For people in York. Free short-term help after a hospital stay: a lift home, help settling in, shopping, collecting prescriptions and checking you are recovering well. **01904 726191** · ageuk.org.uk/york

Healthwatch. Help finding health and care services, and a place to tell someone about your care. Healthwatch North Yorkshire: 01423 788 128. Healthwatch York: 01904 621133, then press 3.

Local contacts checked 9 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 9 November 2026.