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 Tyne and Wear

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

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

Local help in Tyne and Wear

Tyne and Wear has five councils: Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland. Each line says which area it is for. Some NHS and charity services cover more than one area.

Newcastle City Council adult social care. For people in Newcastle. Call the council on 0191 278 7878 and ask for Adult Social CarePoint, Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm. You can also ask online. For an emergency at night or at the weekend, call the same number and ask for the Emergency Duty Team. newcastle.gov.uk

Gateshead Council adult social care. For people in Gateshead. Call Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, every day. gateshead.gov.uk

North Tyneside Council adult social care. For people in North Tyneside. Call the Adult Social Care contact centre on 0191 643 2777. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0330 333 7475. mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk

South Tyneside Council adult social care. For people in South Tyneside. Call the Let's Talk team on 0191 424 6000, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0191 456 2093. southtyneside.gov.uk

Sunderland City Council adult social care. For people in Sunderland. Ask for an assessment online on the council website. You can fill in the form for yourself or for someone else. If you are worried about an adult's safety, call 0191 520 5552. sunderland.gov.uk

Equipment. Newcastle: ask Adult Social CarePoint. Gateshead: ask Adult Social Care Direct. Equipment such as bath seats,

commodes and chair raisers can be lent. North Tyneside: call 0191 643 2777 for an assessment. South Tyneside: ask the Let's Talk team. The council lends equipment. For walking sticks and frames, ask your GP. Sunderland: equipment is lent free after an assessment by a nurse, occupational therapist or physio. Call 0191 561 4441, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.45pm.

Falls. Tell your GP about any fall. Your GP may refer you for more help. Sunderland: Steady On Your Feet is a free website. Answer a few questions and get your own plan to lower your risk of falling. Gateshead and North Tyneside: if you have the council's Care Call alarm, its team can come out and help you up if you fall and are not hurt. sunderland.steadyonyourfeet.org

Personal alarms. A button to press for help, 24 hours a day. Newcastle: Ostara gives a free telecare chat to find what suits you. Call 0191 277 7470. Gateshead: Care Call. There is a charge. Call 0191 478 7665. North Tyneside: Care Call. There is a charge. Call 0191 643 2777. South Tyneside: the Technology and Independence team. There is a charge. Call 0191 455 5523. Sunderland: Sunderland Care and Support runs a 24-hour telecare service. Call 0191 520 5000.

Help for carers. Newcastle: Newcastle Carers gives free help. Call 0191 275 5060, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Gateshead: Caregivers Connected Gateshead gives free help. Call 0808 801 0350, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. North Tyneside: North Tyneside Carers Centre (northtynesidecarers.org.uk). South Tyneside: Connected Caring South Tyneside is free for carers aged 18 or over (connectedcaring.org.uk). Sunderland: Sunderland Carers Centre, 0191 549 3768. In Gateshead and South Tyneside a carer's assessment from the council is free.

Home Fire Safety Check. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service has a short online check. Walk round your home and

answer the questions. It tells you if you can have a visit. If you can, they fit smoke alarms and give you advice. twfire.gov.uk

Age UK and Age Concern. Help and advice for older people. Age UK Gateshead: 0191 477 3559. Age UK North Tyneside: 0191 280 8484, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm. Age UK Sunderland: 0191 514 1131. South Tyneside: Age Concern Tyneside South, 0191 456 6903.

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

Healthwatch. Healthwatch is independent. Tell them about your health or social care, good or bad. Newcastle: 0808 178 9282. Gateshead: 0800 038 5116. North Tyneside: 0191 263 5321. South Tyneside: 0191 489 7952. Sunderland: 0191 514 7145.

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.