FREE PRINTABLE GUIDE FROM MOBILE PHYSIOTHERAPIST UK

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 Wiltshire

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

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

Local help in Wiltshire

Wiltshire has two councils. Wiltshire Council covers most of the county, including Salisbury, Chippenham and Trowbridge. Swindon Borough Council covers Swindon and Highworth. Each line says which area it is for. Some NHS and charity services cover both.

Wiltshire Council adult social care. For people in the Wiltshire Council area, outside Swindon. Call the Advice and Contact Team on 0300 456 0111, Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4pm. You can also ask for help online. Out of hours, for emergencies: 0300 456 0100. adults.wiltshire.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council adult social care. For people in the Swindon Borough Council area. Call 01793 445500 during office hours. There is a charge for social care, so ask about it when you call. swindon.gov.uk/adultsocialcare

Equipment. Wiltshire Council area: ask for an assessment on 0300 456 0111. There is no charge for equipment and small changes such as rails from the council. Medequip lends the equipment. When you no longer need it, call Medequip on 01249 815052, Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5pm, for a free collection. Swindon Borough Council area: call 01793 445500. The assessment is free, and equipment is usually lent free from the council's own store.

Falls. Wiltshire Council area: falls prevention classes run across the county, for people who have had a fall or feel less steady. Call 07799 074312 to sign up. Swindon Borough Council area: Live Well Swindon runs a 16-week strength and balance course, mainly for people aged 65 or over. There is a charge. Call 01793 465513. In both areas you can make your own falls plan online. bsw.steadyonyourfeet.org

Personal alarms. Wiltshire Council area: Medequip Connect provides the council's alarms, watched 24 hours a day. You may have to pay a weekly charge. Ask the council on 0300 456 0111, or call Medequip Connect on 01249 472980. Swindon Borough Council area: the council's Homeline alarm service is not taking new users at the moment. Its web page lists other alarm services.

Help for carers. Wiltshire Council area: Carers Together Wiltshire gives advice, breaks, training and support, and can arrange a carer's assessment. Call 01380 710300. Swindon Borough Council area: Swindon Carers Together supports unpaid carers. Call 01793 531133, Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. In Swindon there is no charge for a carer's assessment or for a Carer's Emergency Card.

Home Fire Safety Visit. A free visit from Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. They check your home room by room, and can fit smoke alarms where needed. Call or ask online. **0800 038 2323** · dwfire.org.uk

Age UK Wiltshire. Free advice for older people in Wiltshire and Swindon, from benefits to care. Advice line Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm. **0808 196 24 24** · ageuk.org.uk/wiltshire

Citizens Advice. Help with money, benefits and other problems. Wiltshire Council area: call freephone 0808 278 7995, Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm. Swindon Borough Council area: Citizens Advice Swindon gives free advice. Contact it through citizensadviceswindon.org.uk.

Healthwatch. Healthwatch Wiltshire (healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk) and Healthwatch Swindon (healthwatchswindon.org.uk) are independent. Tell them about your health or care, good or bad, to help services improve.

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.