



**Independent
Age**

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Creator



Patient Information Forum

Getting help at home

Ways to stay independent



Thank you

We would like to thank those who shared their experiences as this guide was being developed, and those who reviewed it for us.

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We spoke to older people about their experiences. Their quotes appear throughout. We have changed the names of some of the interviewees who wished to be anonymous. Some of the images seen throughout this guide are posed by friends of Independent Age.

The PIF TICK is the UK-wide Quality Mark for Health Information.

About this guide

If you're looking for some ways to stay independent in your own home, there is lots of help you can get. There are services, gadgets and equipment to help meet your short-term or long-term needs.

This table can help you think about the types of support you need, and shows where in this guide you can find more information.

What I need	Chapter
Help with household chores, such as cleaning and gardening	1
Help to manage day-to-day tasks and activities, such as getting around my house	2 and 3
Short-term help when I get out of hospital	6
Help to look after myself, for example, with washing and dressing	7



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1. Getting help with household chores

Household chores may feel harder as you get older. But with a bit of extra help, you can keep your home safe, clean and comfortable.

1. Getting help with household chores

Help with cleaning

If you're thinking of employing a cleaner, think about how much you can afford to pay them and which tasks are most important for them to do. This way, you can prioritise what needs to be done within your budget.

Be realistic about how much they'd be able to do in a set amount of time, like two hours a week. Not all cleaners are happy to do all tasks, so check beforehand.

“Housework and going to the laundrette were really taking it out of me because of my angina. Now a friendly woman comes four hours a week and finishes jobs that took me three days! My flat is clean as a new pin and even my shirts get ironed.

To find a cleaner, try asking your friends or neighbours for recommendations. Your local council may have a list of cleaning services – check their website or call their adult social services department. To find your council's contact details visit **gov.uk/find-local-council**, or call the Local Government Association on **020 7664 3000**. You can also ask your local Age UK if they provide cleaning services – you'll have to pay for these:

- England, call **0800 678 1602** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area**
- Scotland, call **0800 12 44 222** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/scotland/services**
- Wales, call **029 2043 1555** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/in-your-area**.

If you'd only like help with laundry and ironing, check with your local dry cleaner. They may offer loyalty discounts, special rates for pensioners or a delivery service.

1. Getting help with household chores

Help with shopping

If you still like to do your own shopping but find it hard to get around, ShopMobility lends scooters or wheelchairs to people to use in shops or leisure facilities. Check if there's one near you by contacting Driving Mobility on **0800 559 3636**, or visiting **shopmobilityuk.org**. Some schemes are free and others have a small charge.

If you'd prefer, you may be able to get help with shopping from a volunteer. Check which services are available at:

- your local Age UK (see **page 5** for contact details)
- Royal Voluntary Service (**0845 608 0122**, **royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/our-services/supporting-people**)
- local shops – for example, someone to walk round with you and help you reach items on higher shelves
- other local organisations.

You could also think about doing your shopping online. All large supermarkets and many other shops offer this service, usually for a small delivery fee. It can be particularly helpful when buying heavy or bulky items. A few supermarkets offer telephone ordering from the store – ask your local branch what they provide.



1. Getting help with household chores

Help with food

You may want extra help with preparing meals for yourself. There are lots of ways you can be supported.

- If you live in England or Wales, your local council may have a Meals on Wheels service. This will normally be a hot meal and a pudding. Your council will typically only provide this if they assess that you need it, and there is normally a charge. You can find their contact information at **gov.uk/meals-home** or by calling the Local Government Association on **020 7664 3000**.
- If you live in Scotland, the social care department of your local council may be able to organise a meal service. You can find their contact details at **careinfoscotland.scot/find-my-council** or by calling Care Information Scotland on **0800 011 3200**.
- You may also be able to arrange a private meal delivery service. Ask people you trust for recommendations, because you will have to pay for this.
- Age UK offers lots of different services to help you get food, from home delivery to help with internet shopping. You can check what your local Age UK offers at **ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area/shopping**.

Help with the garden

If you have a garden, looking after it can be good for your wellbeing and mental health. A well-kept garden may also protect you from scammers, who might think a messy or overgrown space means someone vulnerable is living in the home. If you would like to maintain your garden but find it difficult to do alone, there are lots of things you can do.

You could look for aids to make gardening easier, like:

- easy-grip or long-reach forks and trowels
- garden kneelers with hand rails
- lightweight watering cans with buttons to control the flow of water.

Check a local or online DIY store to see what's available. Living Made Easy also has information about equipment (**0300 123 3084**, **livingmadeeasy.org.uk**).

Thrive is a charity that supports people with disabilities or long-term health conditions to keep gardening. They can provide lots of useful advice and information about carrying on gardening (**0118 988 5688**, **thrive.org.uk/get-gardening**).

1. Getting help with household chores

If you want to employ a gardener, see if a neighbour or your local garden centre can recommend someone. Or find out if your local Age UK offers a paid-for gardening service:

- England, call **0800 678 1602** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area**
- Scotland, call **0800 12 44 222** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/scotland/services**
- Wales, call **029 2043 1555** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/in-your-area**.

If you're a council tenant, your council may also be able to help with garden maintenance. To find your council's contact details, visit **gov.uk/find-local-council**, or call the Local Government Association on **020 7664 3000**.

Help with one-off tasks

You might want help with small, one-off practical tasks, like moving furniture, changing lightbulbs or gardening. You can try the charity GoodGym. They provide volunteer runners to carry out tasks for older people in some areas. Contact GoodGym or visit their website for more information (**0203 432 3920**, **goodgym.org/request-a-mission**).

You can also contact your local Age UK to see if they provide handyperson services for a fee. See **page 10** for contact details.

They may be able to help with things like putting up curtain rails, changing locks or fitting grab rails.



2. Equipment and adaptations to make life easier

If you find it difficult to do certain things, specialist equipment or changes to your home might help.

It's a good idea to get an expert opinion because there are lots of options available. Call your local council to arrange a care needs assessment that involves occupational therapy. To find your council's contact details, visit **gov.uk/find-local-council**, or call the Local Government Association on **020 7664 3000**.

What happens at a care needs assessment

Occupational therapy is when a professional looks at what everyday tasks you struggle to do, and if there are easier and safer ways for you to do them. An occupational therapist may suggest aids, equipment, or adaptations to your home to keep you as mobile and independent as possible. This might be things like grab rails by the toilet, extra handrails on the stairs or levelling door thresholds.



There are differences between the care needs assessment in Scotland and in England and Wales. Our factsheet **First steps in getting help with your care needs** has lots of information about this – we have a version for England and Wales and a version for Scotland, so make sure you've got the right one. You can order it through our Helpline on **0800 319 6789**.

2. Equipment and adaptations to make life easier

During your assessment, make sure you tell your assessor about any difficulties you have – for example, you may need help getting into bed, or bending down to put on shoes or plug in the vacuum cleaner. The assessment also looks at whether you need help with personal care, which includes tasks like washing and dressing.

“ I get dizzy if I stand for too long and it made me anxious about taking a shower. The social services sent an occupational therapist to see me. She was lovely. She arranged for a grab rail to be fitted on the wall of my shower cubicle, and a folding shower seat to the side, so I can sit down to have a shower without fearing I’m going to fall.

After your assessment

You'll be told the next steps once you've had your assessment. Social services should give you a written record of your care assessment – ask if you don't get one. Check that it's accurate and that everything relevant has been taken into account.

If you live in England or Wales

In England, if you're assessed as needing equipment or minor adaptations (up to £1,000 each) the council has to provide them for free. They may not pay for very small aids, such as adapted cutlery or easy-open can openers, so you'd need to buy those yourself. Contact Living Made Easy (**0300 123 3084**, **livingmadeeasy.org.uk**) for more information and a list of suppliers. If you're assessed as needing an adaptation that costs more than £1,000 – such as a stairlift, ramps to get into your home or widening doorways – you may be able to get help to pay for it.

In Wales, your local council should pay for small adaptations, such as grab rails, stair rails, accessible taps, small ramps or key safes. If an adaptation is more complex or larger, they may not pay for it. Ask your local council for their adaptations policy.

For more information, see our guide

Paying for care at home in England and Wales.

2. Equipment and adaptations to make life easier

You might be able to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) of up to either £30,000 in England or £36,000 in Wales. This depends on your income and savings. You usually won't be able to get anything if you've already started work on your adaptations before your application has been approved, so look into it before you start. Speak to your council about how to apply (**020 7664 3000**, **gov.uk/find-local-council**).

You could also contact a Home Improvement Agency for advice:

- in England – Home Improvement Agency (**0300 124 0315**, **findmyhia.org.uk**)
- in Wales – Care and Repair Cymru (**0300 111 3333**, **careandrepair.org.uk**).

The DFG process may take a while, but you should hear within six months whether you qualify. The work should then be done within a year of your application, but can take longer.

If you live in Scotland

If your assessment finds that your care needs meet your council's eligibility criteria, your local council must decide how your needs should be met. Although personal care and nursing care are free in Scotland, you may need to pay towards any equipment or adaptations that you need. If this is the case, you'll have a financial assessment to decide how much you should contribute towards the cost of your support. For more information, see our guide **Paying for care at home in Scotland**.

Whether you live in England, Wales or Scotland, local councils may also decide to help fund adaptations in other ways. They can choose to provide help – like grants and loans – to anyone who needs to adapt or repair their home, or improve their living conditions.

RiDC, which carries out consumer research for older and disabled people, has information about the likely costs of adaptations and equipment (**020 7427 2460**, **ridc.org.uk**). You can also contact Care and Repair (**0141 221 9879**, **careandrepairsotland.co.uk**) for advice.

For more information, see our factsheet **Adapting your home to stay independent** or visit **gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants**.



3. Gadgets to help you feel safer

Nowadays there's a range of simple technology available to help keep you safer and more comfortable at home. It's not just limited to personal alarms.

Telecare

Telecare services are a combination of alarms and sensors that call for help when they're set off. This allows you to manage risks and get help in an emergency, while still keeping your independence at home.

Telecare devices include:

- wearable alarms, which can be worn as a necklace or watch, or clipped on to clothing
- fixed alarms, such as pull cords
- movement sensors – for example, to detect if you've fallen out of bed
- incontinence sensors
- gas shut-off devices
- pill dispensers to release medication at the right time and trigger an alarm if it isn't removed
- fire and smoke alarms that automatically call for help.

3. Gadgets to help you feel safer

Some telecare devices connect to a support centre offering 24/7 monitoring. The support centre receives a call when your alarm goes off. They'll then contact you to check you're okay, or contact a relative, neighbour or the emergency services.

Other devices use short-range sensors to alert a carer or relative in your home that something is wrong. There are also devices that autodial a pre-set number, such as the number of a neighbour or relative.

Telecare might reduce the need for some home visits from care workers and provide extra peace of mind.

“ I had a small stroke last year. Now I've got this smart sensor strapped to my belt that can detect a sudden movement like me keeling over, and that rings through to a centre. It's very reassuring for my wife.

How to get telecare

Your local council will offer some telecare services, but you'll have to meet certain criteria to get them. Start by getting a care needs assessment to find out what they can offer you (see **page 13**).

If they decide you do need support, including from telecare, you'll be given a financial assessment to work out how much you have to pay towards it. Charges will vary from area to area – telecare may be free in some areas.

You can also buy telecare privately. Do plenty of research and shop around so you get the service that suits you best. You'll usually have to pay an initial set-up fee and a weekly or monthly monitoring fee.

For more information on telecare, or to get a list of providers near you, contact:

- your local council (**gov.uk/find-local-council**, or call the Local Government Association on **020 7664 3000**)
- TEC Services Association (TSA) (**01625 520 320**, **tsa-voice.org.uk**)
- Living Made Easy (**0300 123 3084**, **livingmadeeasy.org.uk**).

3. Gadgets to help you feel safer

Telehealth

Telehealth devices are usually provided by your GP or another health professional, so they can monitor certain health conditions remotely. They'll show you how to use the device and explain how it will help them to treat your health condition. Services will vary from area to area, but here are a couple of examples.

- If you have high blood pressure, a telehealth device can monitor it. The results will automatically be sent to your GP, allowing them to manage your medication and alerting them if your blood pressure gets too high.
- If you have diabetes and use insulin, a telehealth device can monitor your blood sugar levels. It can alert you if your blood sugar gets too high or too low so you can adjust your insulin dosage.

If you think telehealth might be suitable for you, speak to your GP to find out what is available in your area.



For more information on telecare and telehealth, see our factsheet
Technology to help you at home.



4. Staying connected at home

If you find it difficult to get out and about, it's important to think about keeping in touch with people. This chapter outlines some ways to stay connected.

4. Staying connected at home

If you're living alone, you might find it hard to meet other people, particularly if you have any other difficulties – like health or mobility problems – or you don't have spare money to socialise.

If you would like to make some new connections in your area, get in touch with your local Age UK (see **page 25** for contact details) for support.

If you are part of the LGBTQ+ community and looking to connect with the community more, get in touch with Opening Doors (**0207 183 6260**, **openingdoors.lgbt**). Opening Doors is a charity supporting older members of the LGBTQ+ community specifically.

There are lots of ways to stay in touch with your friends. If you don't fancy phone calls or visits, you could try email, online video calls like Skype, or a social networking site like Facebook.



Our guide **Scamwise** has information about staying safe online.

“ I love my home. I'd hate to move. I just wish I had a bit more company.

If you want to learn how to use a computer or get online, see if your local council, library or Online Centre can help (**0114 349 1666**, **onlinecentresnetwork.org**). Your local Age UK might offer simple courses:

- England, call **0800 678 1602** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area**
- Scotland, call **0800 12 44 222** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/scotland/services**
- Wales, call **029 2043 1555** or visit **ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/in-your-area**.

For more information about using technology, visit our Technology Hub at **independentage.org/get-advice/technology**.



Take a look at our guide **If you're feeling lonely** for some more ideas and support.



5. Extra money if you need help to look after yourself

If you are worried about paying for help at home, you may be entitled to benefits that can help with the cost.

Attendance Allowance

Attendance Allowance is extra, tax-free money you can get if you are over State Pension age and have a long-term disability or health condition. You don't need to actually be getting help at home to claim Attendance Allowance – the important thing is that you need help.

Attendance Allowance isn't means-tested, so you can claim it regardless of your income or savings. If you're able to get Attendance Allowance, you can spend the money on whatever you need.



See our guide **Attendance Allowance** for more information.



We were told Mum could claim Attendance Allowance. She was awarded it and can now afford to pay someone to help her do the things she finds difficult. She still wants to wash and dress herself but prefers to have a shower when the carer is there to help.

5. Extra money if you need help to look after yourself

Personal Independence Payment in England and Wales

If you're under your State Pension age you might be able to claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP). PIP is a benefit for people who have problems with daily living activities or mobility, because of a long-term illness or disability. Applying for PIP involves an assessment as well as filling in a claim form.

Adult Disability Payment in Scotland

Adult Disability Payment (ADP) has replaced PIP in Scotland. Like PIP, it isn't means-tested. You can claim no matter what your income is, if you have any savings and whether or not you're working.



For more information on PIP or ADP, see our factsheet **Disability benefits for adults under State Pension age**.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit is extra money from the government to top up your pension income. It also acts as a passport to other entitlements, such as a free TV licence if you're over 75, Council Tax reductions and help with health costs. How much extra money you get depends on your financial situation.



Our guide **Pension Credit** has more information about how to claim. Call our free Helpline on **0800 319 6789** to order a copy.



5. Extra money if you need help to look after yourself

Get a benefits check

It's worth getting a benefits check to see if there's anything else you could be claiming. Try our online calculator (**independentage.org/benefits-calculator**) or call us on **0800 319 6789** to arrange a free benefits check.

If you were already getting Pension Credit, Council Tax Support or Housing Benefit and are now getting Attendance Allowance or another disability benefit, you may get an additional amount for severe disability added to these benefits. If you're not already receiving these benefits, you may now qualify for them.

“ I get Pension Credit and Disability Living Allowance. They help.



6. Home from hospital help

If you've been in hospital, you might need some short- or longer-term support to get you back on your feet.

6. Home from hospital help

Volunteers to welcome you home

Some voluntary organisations offer home-from-hospital services. This might include taking you home, collecting prescriptions, picking up groceries or visiting for a few weeks afterwards. Try:

- the Royal Voluntary Service
(**0845 608 0122**, royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/get-help/hospital-support)
- the British Red Cross (**0344 871 1111**,
redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-support-at-home)
- Age UK
 - in England, call **0800 678 1602** or visit
ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area
 - in Scotland, call **0800 12 44 222** or visit
ageuk.org.uk/scotland/services
 - in Wales, call **029 2043 1555** or visit
ageuk.org.uk/cymru/our-work/in-your-area
- local charities or volunteer visitors at your hospital.

Extra support after your hospital stay

If you'll need extra support after you're discharged, the hospital should arrange some short-term help for you. They should also refer you on for any other assessments you need after leaving hospital, like a care needs or NHS Continuing Healthcare assessment (England and Wales only). These look at any ongoing help you might need.

Reablement support

You might be entitled to some free short-term care to help you regain your independence. This is sometimes known as intermediate care or reablement. These services aim to help you:

- keep or relearn skills you need to live independently
- stay out of hospital in the future
- stay in your own home for longer.

If you qualify, support should be provided free of charge for a certain time period, usually 1–6 weeks. You may be asked to pay for services that are longer than six weeks.

6. Home from hospital help

Before you leave hospital, make sure you know who is responsible for providing any care you need, who is paying for it and how you can contact them. If you have any concerns about an upcoming discharge, call Independent Age on **0800 319 6789**.

In England and Wales, if you're unhappy about any aspect of your discharge, you can make a complaint within 12 months of leaving hospital. In Scotland, you have six months to complain.

The hospital will have a Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) (England and Wales) or a Patient Advice and Support Service (PASS) (Scotland) to help you. Call your GP or hospital, or search online (**[nhs.uk/service-search](https://www.nhs.uk/service-search)**) to find your local service. For more information, see our factsheet **Complaints about health services**.

“ When I got home nothing was arranged, no carers at all. Fortunately my friend stepped in to help, but it was quite frightening. I wouldn't want it to happen to anyone else.



7. Help with personal care at home

If you need help to look after yourself but want to stay in your own home, you could consider getting personal care at home.

7. Help with personal care at home

What is personal care?

Personal care refers to help to look after your physical needs, for example:

- washing yourself
- dressing and undressing
- going to the toilet
- getting into and out of bed
- preparing and eating food
- getting enough to drink
- remembering to take medication.

Personal care is different from nursing care, which is given by a registered nurse and includes things like giving injections or changing dressings.



Good to know

Just like getting equipment and telecare, the best place to start is with a care needs assessment from your local council – see **page 13** for details.

Getting care through your council

Ask your council for a care needs assessment – see **page 13**. For more information on what to expect from your care needs assessment, see our factsheet

First steps in getting help with your care needs.

There are different rules for Scotland and for England and Wales, so make sure you're reading the right factsheet for where you live.

After you are assessed, there are many services that you may be told could suit you, including:

- home care – for example, visits from a care worker to help you to wash and dress, or respite care to give a family carer a break
- attending a day centre
- telecare
- mobility equipment, such as walking frames
- moving into more suitable accommodation.

7. Help with personal care at home

If you live in England or Wales and qualify for council help, you'll have a separate financial assessment to work out whether you have to pay for any of it. This will look at your income and savings. If the council is paying for any of your care, you'll have options about how you receive it, where the council can:

- arrange and provide your care
- spend an agreed amount of money on care services you choose
- give you the money they've worked out is needed to meet your needs (called your personal budget in England). You can spend this on services you choose, as long as they meet your assessed needs. This is called a direct payment.

If you live in Scotland and your assessment finds you meet your council's eligibility criteria, your council should provide personal and nursing care for free. You will have to pay for care that falls outside of personal or nursing care.

Depending on where you live, see our guides **Paying for care at home in Scotland** or **Paying for care at home in England and Wales**.

If a relative or friend is caring for you at home, they can also get a carer's assessment. To see if they could get help, see our guide **Caring for someone**.

Finding a care worker yourself

If you're finding a care worker yourself, you can employ them directly or through an agency. If you employ them directly, you'll have more control over who cares for you and what they do, but you'll also have legal responsibilities as an employer. For instance, you'll need to get employers' liability insurance. Many people find it simpler to arrange home care through an agency.

If you're looking for a local home care agency, try:

- your council – they'll probably have a directory of local services on their website, or call them to ask
- the Homecare Association (**020 8661 8188**, **homecareassociation.org.uk/find-care/homecare-directory.html**) – they have a database of member agencies, which must agree to certain standards
- the organisation that inspects care services where you live – they can provide you with inspection reports for home care agencies. If you live in England, contact the Care Quality Commission (**03000 616161**, **cqc.org.uk**). In Scotland, contact the Care Inspectorate (**03456 009 527**, **careinspectorate.com/index.php/care-services**). In Wales, contact the Care Inspectorate Wales (**0300 790 0126**, **careinspectorate.wales/find-care-service**).

7. Help with personal care at home

If you're employing a care worker directly, a local disability organisation or independent living centre might be able to help you find someone reliable. Gov.uk has some useful information on your responsibilities as an employer ([gov.uk/employing-staff](https://www.gov.uk/employing-staff)).

The costs of employing a care worker vary from area to area and depend on the time of day you need care. It's best to ask for a quote before you agree to anything, to make sure it falls within your budget.

Make a list of questions in advance that you want to ask a care worker or home care agency. For a checklist of things to ask, see our factsheet **Arranging home care**.





8. Making a complaint

If you're unhappy with the services you're getting, or with any of the council's assessments, you can make a complaint.

8. Making a complaint



Important

You should make your complaint as soon as possible.

Complaints to the council

You can complain to the council for many reasons, including if:

- you don't agree with the outcome of your care needs or occupational therapy assessments
- there have been delays in getting an assessment
- you don't think your personal budget is high enough to meet your needs (England only)
- you don't think you're being charged the correct amount, and the council won't reconsider the charges
- you're worried about the quality of the services you're getting
- you don't agree with the outcome of a Disabled Facilities Grant application.

Start by raising your complaint informally with staff. If this doesn't solve the problem, you can make a formal complaint using the council's complaints procedure.

If you're paying for your own care

If you're paying for your own care, you can complain to the care agency. All care agencies must have a complaints procedure.

In England, if you want to take your complaint further, you can complain to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (**0300 061 0614**, **lgo.org.uk**). They look into complaints about councils and care agencies. In Scotland, contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (**0800 377 7330**, **spsso.org.uk/spsso**). In Wales, contact the Public Services Ombudsman (**0300 790 0203**, **ombudsman.wales**).



8. Making a complaint

Help to make a complaint

If you need support to make a complaint, ask a relative or friend for help or speak to your local Citizens Advice (if you live in England call **0800 144 8848**, Scotland **0800 028 1456** and Wales **0800 702 2020**, citizensadvice.org.uk).

For more information about making a complaint or challenging decisions about your care, see our factsheet **Complaints about social care services**.

If you disagree with a benefits decision

If you've been turned down for Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, you can ask the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to reconsider the decision. For Adult Disability Payment, contact Social Security Scotland. Make sure you do this by the deadline given on the decision letter.



For more about challenging a benefits decision, see our factsheet **What to do if you disagree with a benefits decision**.

You can also contact our free Helpline on **0800 319 6789** to arrange to speak to an adviser.

If you're worried about abuse

Abuse can happen anywhere and can take many forms, such as financial, physical, sexual or psychological abuse, or neglect.

If you're concerned about any behaviour from care staff that doesn't seem right, it's important to speak up. Contact the council or police immediately, or speak to Hourglass for advice (**0808 808 8141**, **wearehourglass.org**).



For more information, see our guide **Staying in control.**



Summary

- You can get help with lots of household chores – like cleaning, shopping, preparing hot meals, managing your garden, and practical tasks like changing lightbulbs (**chapter 1**).
- If you think you'll need extra help at home, it's a good idea to get a care needs assessment from your local council (**chapter 2**).
- There is lots of equipment and adaptations that can be added to your home to make day-to-day living easier (**chapter 2**).
- Gadgets like telecare or telehealth devices can give you confidence to live as independently as possible (**chapter 3**).
- If you're feeling lonely at home, there are lots of ways to connect with people (**chapter 4**).
- You may be able to get extra benefits to help pay for help at home (**chapter 5**).
- There is support available if you need help to get back on your feet after coming out of hospital – ask your local patient advice service for more information (**chapter 6**).

- If you feel that you need a carer, there are different ways you can organise this (**chapter 7**).
- If you're unhappy with the help you're getting at home, you can make a complaint – it's best to do this as soon as possible (**chapter 8**).



Photo posed by a model



Daisy's story

My mother could always go up and down stairs at my home, so the realisation that she couldn't do this any more was a real watershed moment. We brought a bed from upstairs and made a room for her downstairs. It wasn't ideal though, because we only had a small downstairs cloakroom, so we started looking at adapting downstairs to get a small ensuite wet room for her.

A social worker and occupational therapist gave us some ideas and recommended a rollator. We found a mobile hairdresser through a friend, a gardener through another friend and the mobility adaptations to her house were done by a family friend who is a builder.

The DWP was very helpful when we needed to apply for Attendance Allowance to pay for a carer or any other help Mum needed. This included payment for an alarm that she wore round her neck at all times – it linked to a central control, which then alerted people on her call list. It meant that mum didn't have to have someone with her all the time.

“ The DWP was very helpful when we needed to apply for Attendance Allowance to pay for a carer or any other help Mum needed.

About Independent Age

No one should face financial hardship in later life.

Independent Age is a national charity providing support for older people facing financial hardship. We offer free impartial advice and information on what matters most: money, housing and care.

We financially support local community organisations across the UK through our grants programme. We campaign for change for older people struggling with their finances.

You can call us on freephone **0800 319 6789** (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.30pm) or email **helpline@independentage.org** to arrange to speak to one of our advisers.

To donate or help support our work, please visit **independentage.org/support-us**.



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