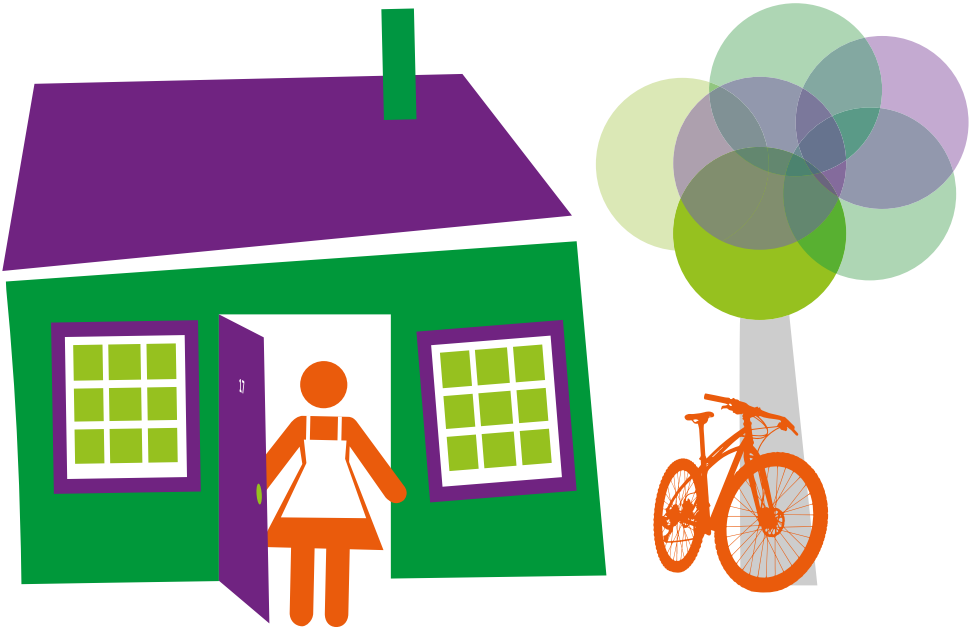
Care and Support at Home

Practical Help



Who we are

Age Scotland is the Scottish charity for older people. We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 and promote their rights and interests.

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people enjoy better later lives.

We have three strategic aims:

We help older people to be as well as they can be

We promote a positive view of ageing and later life

We tackle loneliness and isolation

How we can help

We know that growing older doesn't come with a manual. Later life can bring changes and opportunities to your life and you may need to know about rights, organisations and services which are unfamiliar to you.

That's why we provide free information and advice to help you on a range of topics including benefits and entitlements, social care, legal issues such as Power of Attorney, housing and much more. All of our guides are available to download for free from our website, or you can contact our helpline team to have copies posted to you for free.

Our **helpline** is a free, confidential phone service for older people, their carers and families in Scotland looking for information and advice.

Later life can bring times when you just need someone to talk to. Our **friendship line** is part of our wider helpline and older people can call us for a chat. We're here to listen, provide friendship and offer support.

Call us free on: 0800 12 44 222
(Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm)

Visit agescotland.org.uk to find out more.

Care and Support at Home: Practical Help

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Introduction

Most people want to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible. As you become older, you might start to need help with things you used to be able to manage for yourself. You may need help because you:

- are unable to climb in and out of the bath
- have difficulty turning taps
- take a long time to get into and out of bed
- struggle to go up or down stairs
- cannot see or hear clearly
- find it awkward to stand up or sit down to use the toilet
- forget what you need to do to stay safe

There may be care, support, equipment or minor adaptations that could help you to manage better at home. The responsibility for meeting your care and support needs is split between your local council and NHS, who should work closely together. This guide can help you to explore what types of help may be available.

Our **Care and Support at Home: Assessment and Funding** guide provides information about help with care costs, and **Benefits Maze** provides details of the benefits available if you need care.

Call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** or visit **www.age.scot/information**.

Assessment of your care needs

If you feel you need support to help you manage day to day, you can ask your council to assess your care needs. In some areas, such as Highland, you will need to ask your NHS instead.

You do not need a letter from a health professional to ask for the assessment, but having one may help the assessor to understand your needs. If you have a carer they should be involved in the assessment as they can describe the help they give you.

You will usually be assessed at home, by a social worker or an occupational therapist. If you are being discharged from hospital, you may be assessed partly in the hospital and partly at home. Assessments should happen as soon as possible, but there may be a delay to you being assessed or receiving any equipment the assessment says you need.

After your assessment, you will be given a care plan (or support plan). This will describe the needs you have been assessed to have, and the support that the assessor feels would help. This could include care, equipment, or adaptations to your home. It will also tell you what help the council or NHS can give you towards costs.

How is care and support arranged?

You should be given a choice about how any care, support and equipment you need is arranged and managed. This choice is called **Self-Directed Support**. You may prefer everything to be arranged for you, or you may wish to put the funding from the council towards arranging some or all of your support yourself.

It is important to get expert advice to make sure any care you arrange, or equipment you buy, is right for you. See page 16 on buying your own equipment.

For more information about Self-Directed Support, visit **www.sdsscotland.org.uk/get-help-with-sds** or call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

Who pays for care and support?

Any personal or nursing care that your care plan says you need, and any equipment needed to support this, should be free.

Personal care can include help with dressing, washing, eating and drinking, or getting around. It can also be someone to watch over you to keep you safe, for example if you are unsteady on your feet.

You may be charged for other services or equipment, and these costs are decided at a local level. You should always be told what these costs will be before you are asked to agree to them.

Some things in your care plan may be classed as adaptations, such as changes to a shower. Costs for adaptations are worked out separately. See the housing adaptations section on page 19 for details.

Charitable funding is sometimes available to help pay for equipment. **Turn2us** has an online tool allowing you to search for help that may be available to you.

Visit **www.turn2us.org.uk** or call the **Age Scotland helpline** if you do not have access to the internet.

SOCIAL CARE NOT ORDINARILY CHARGED FOR

As regards the personal hygiene of the person cared for:

- shaving
- cleaning teeth (whether or not they are artificial) by means of a brush or dental floss and (in the case of artificial teeth) by means of soaking
- providing assistance in rinsing the mouth
- keeping finger nails and toe nails trimmed
- assisting the person with going to the toilet or with using a bedpan or other receptacle
- where the person is fitted with a catheter or stoma, providing such assistance as is requisite to ensure cleanliness and that the skin is kept in a favorable hygienic condition

Where the person is incontinent:

- the consequential making of the person's bed and consequential changing and laundering of the person's bedding and clothing
- caring for the person's skin to ensure that it is not adversely affected

If the person requires medical treatment, assisting with medication, as for example by:

- applying creams or lotions
- administering eye drops
- applying dressings in cases where this can be done without the physical involvement of a registered nurse or of a medical practitioner
- assisting with the administration of oxygen as part of a course of therapy

As regards eating requirements, the preparation of, or the provision of any assistance with the preparation of, the person's food including (without prejudice to that generality):

- defrosting, washing, peeling, cutting, chopping, pureeing, mixing or combining, cooking, heating or re-heating, or otherwise preparing food or ingredients
- cooking, heating or re-heating pre-prepared fresh or frozen food
- portioning or serving food
- cutting up, pureeing or otherwise processing food to assist with eating it
- advising on food preparation
- assisting in the fulfilment of special dietary needs

but not the supply of food (whether in the form of a pre-prepared meal or ingredients for a meal) to, or the obtaining of food for, the person, or the preparation of food prior to the point of supply to the person.

If the person is immobile or substantially immobile, dealing with the problems of that immobility.

With regard to the person's general well-being:

- assisting with getting dressed
- assisting with surgical appliances, prosthesis and mechanical and manual equipment
- assisting with getting up and with going to bed
- the provision of devices to help memory and of safety devices
- behaviour management and psychological support

Options for arranging care and support

Ways to arrange your own care

You can ask your council for help arranging any care services listed in your care plan. If you would prefer to arrange these yourself (Option 1 of Self-Directed Support), or you would like care services not listed in your care plan, there are a number of ways you can arrange these.

Making a contract with a home care service

You could make a contract with a home care agency who can provide carers to support you at home. This could include help with bathing, getting in and out of bed, getting dressed, preparing a meal or collecting medication. The number of visits you arrange will depend on your needs and what you can afford within your budget. It could be anything from half an hour a week to several hours a day, or even live-in care.

To find a local home care agency you could:

- ask your local council for recommendations
- contact the **Care Inspectorate** for a list of agencies and their care service and inspection reports: **0345 600 9527** / **www.careinspectorate.scot**
- contact the **UK Home Care Association** for details of home care agencies that follow its code of practice: **020 8661 8188** / **www.homecareassociation.org.uk**
- ask friends, relatives or neighbours if they have had good experiences with local agencies

Ask any agencies you are interested in to send you a brochure and their price list, or check their website for details of the service they provide. You may want to check:

- Have they cared for anyone with similar needs to yours?
- Are their carers trained in managing your medical condition?
- Do their carers understand the needs of people with your cultural or religious beliefs and practices?
- What ongoing training do their carers receive?
- Have their carers had criminal record checks with Disclosure Scotland, and are they members of the PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) scheme?
- What happens if your regular care worker is off sick or on holiday?
- What happens if you are away or go into hospital?
- How do you contact the agency in an emergency?
- Do the prices include VAT and travel costs?
- What happens if you need to cancel the contract at short notice?
- Do they charge extra for evenings or weekends?

The agency you choose will work with you to agree a contract for your care package. This should give details of when they will arrive, what they will do, how long they will stay and any other relevant information. This should be reviewed every year, or more often if your needs change.

You should be comfortable with the care you receive and confident it is right for you. Tell the care agency if you are unhappy with your care and ask if they can make some changes. If that does not work, ask for a copy of their complaints procedure.

Call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** for advice about making a complaint about your care provider.

Employing someone yourself

You may want to employ someone as a Personal Assistant, to help with various aspects of your life. Tasks could include personal care, housework, driving, social support and other types of support or help. To do this you will need to set up an employment contract, deal with tax, National Insurance and possibly a pension. It is important to understand your responsibilities as an employer, including for things like sick pay and holiday pay. You will also need insurance as you are responsible for the carer's health and safety while they are working for you.

You should ensure that anyone you employ has had the appropriate criminal record checks from Disclosure Scotland. A local support service or payroll company may be able to do this for you, and may offer other training and support - ask your council if they can recommend one.

In certain circumstances you may be able to employ a partner or relative if the council agrees this is the best or only solution. This may be for reasons of religion, culture or language, or because there are no other options for suitable care locally. Before you employ a partner or relative, think carefully about how being their employer could affect your relationship. They may also want to check how it will affect any benefits they claim.

HMRC can give advice to new employers. Call them on **0300 200 3211** or visit **www.gov.uk/employing-staff**.

Self Directed Support Scotland (SDSS) provides information about employing your own Personal Assistant. Visit **handbook.scot/the-pa-employer-handbook**.

Making a contract with someone self-employed

You can use your Self-Directed Support payments, or your own funds, to make a contract with a person who is self-employed. You should ask them about their training, experience and insurance and check they are registered with the Care Inspectorate.

It is not always clear whether someone is self-employed or could be considered to be employed by you, particularly if they only provide care for you. If you are making a contract with someone who is self-employed, ask them for HMRC documentation to show that they are self-employed for tax purposes. You can find more information about the differences between being employed and self-employed at **www.gov.uk/employment-status/selfemployed-contractor**.

Equipment, aids and adaptations

Equipment and aids for daily living

Various aids and types of equipment can help with different needs. For example, you may need equipment or aids to help you with:

- using the bath or toilet, such as a shower chair, grab rail, bath board or raised toilet seat
- food preparation, such as adapted taps or kitchen utensils
- getting in and out of your bed or chairs, such as an adjustable mattress or chair raisers

Aids or equipment to support with Personal or Nursing Care needs identified in your care plan should be funded by the council, or the NHS if you live in Highland. There may be additional aids and equipment listed in your plan that are not to help with Personal or Nursing Care needs. It is likely you will need to pay for these yourself.

Some types of equipment can be arranged by the NHS, without having a full care needs assessment. This includes commodes and walking aids. You can contact your GP or community nurse if you feel you need one of these items.

For walking aids, you will need to have an assessment with a physiotherapist. They will be able to recommend the most appropriate type of aid and show you how to use it safely.

Aids for daily living

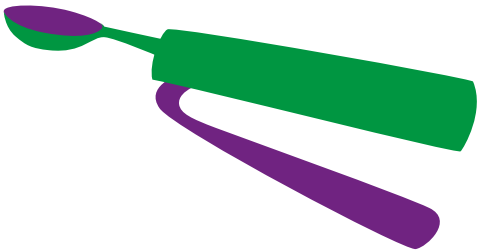
Some aids are adapted versions of household items. Others use technology to make specific tasks easier or safer to carry out.

- A **sensor light** can sense your movement and turn on automatically, reducing the risk of tripping if you get up in the night.
- **Beds and chairs that raise and recline** can be helpful if you struggle with getting up, or with sitting or lying down. These are available from many furniture shops. VAT relief on specialist equipment is available for people who qualify. See page 22 for details.
- An **intercom or video entry system** can help you see who is at the door and to let them in if you want to. This might be helpful if you have mobility problems, or if you are worried about scam callers.
- A **keysafe** can be fitted if you want close friends, relatives or trusted carers to be able to let themselves into your home. Only give the code to people you know well and can trust. A **Care and Repair** service may be able to fit a keysafe for you.

  For details of your local service, call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** or visit **www.careandrepairscotland.co.uk**.
- **Long-handled sponges, grabbers, shoehorns and other extended equipment**. These can be helpful if you have difficulty stretching or bending down. Grabbers should only be used for things that are light enough not to overbalance you, or injure you if they fall.
- A **safety plug or flood alarm** can help to avoid the water overflowing in a bath or sink.
- A **second handrail** may help you to use stairs safely if a stairlift is not an option.
- **Wide-handled cutlery, two-handled cups** and **high-rimmed plates** can help with eating and drinking if you find it difficult to grip things.

- You can buy **sensor mugs** that beep when they are full enough if you have difficulty judging this. You can also get **kettle tippers** that help with pouring hot water safely.
- If you have hearing or sight loss, **adapted doorbells and smoke alarms** with flashing lights or vibrating pads can be set up. **Talking clocks** and **telephones with large buttons** may also be useful.
- **Voice activated 'home hubs'** can be set up to do many tasks, such as controlling lights or heating if you struggle to see or operate the controls. They can also be set up to remind you of things, such as appointments or when to take medications.

Living Made Easy provides information on a wide range of daily living aids and equipment. Visit **www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk**.



Personal aids and accessories

- **Hearing aids** can be provided by the NHS if you need them. You should visit your GP if you think you have hearing loss. They will check if there is a medical reason, and may refer you to your local hospital for a hearing test. The **RNID** provides information and support for people living with hearing loss. Call **0808 808 0123**, or visit **www.rnid.org.uk**.
- Aids such as **magnifiers** could help if you have problems with your sight. The NHS can provide these aids on loan, usually from hospital eye departments or specialist support services. The **RNIB** provides information and support for people living with sight loss. Call **0303 123 9999** or visit **www.rnib.org.uk**.
- **Calendar clocks** and **digital memo reminders** can be useful if you are having memory problems. You may also find it helpful to use reminder apps, or the alarm function on a mobile phone. **Alzheimer Scotland** can provide advice about other equipment that can help with memory problems. Call **0808 808 3000** or visit **www.alzscot.org**.
- Some items such as **wigs** or **fabric supports** may be available through an NHS prescription. See the Age Scotland guide **Accessing NHS Services: Who to contact and how** for more information.

Mobility equipment

Wheelchairs

If you have long-term mobility problems, a wheelchair could help you maintain your independence. Your GP, hospital consultant or council social work team can refer you to your local NHS wheelchair centre. They will assess your needs and can help you choose a suitable wheelchair if you are eligible for one.

NHS wheelchairs are provided on free long-term loan, for as long as you need them. Any wheelchair the NHS provides will officially belong to the NHS and they will pay for any servicing and repairs.

NHS wheelchairs are generally only suitable for daily indoor use. If you are assessed as needing a powered wheelchair, the NHS can provide one suitable for indoor and occasional outdoor use.

Outdoor electric scooters and buggies

It is important to try out scooters and buggies before you buy them, to make sure that what you buy is suitable for your needs. Check what arrangements are needed for storage, battery charging and maintenance.

You also need to be aware of government rules for using scooters on the road or pavement. You can find these rules in the **Highway Code**: **www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code**.

The **Living Made Easy** website provides information about electric scooters and buggies. Visit **www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk**.

Accessible vehicle schemes

If you receive certain benefits, or elements of benefits, you can use your payment to lease a car, scooter or outdoor electric wheelchair. This is either through the **Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Scheme** (for benefits paid by Social Security Scotland) or the **Motability Scheme** (for benefits paid by the Ministry of Defence or the Department for Work and Pensions). Both schemes are run by the charity **Motability**.

The qualifying benefits are:

- Adult Disability Payment enhanced rate mobility component
- Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance higher rate mobility component
- Personal Independence Payment higher rate mobility component
- Disability Living Allowance higher rate mobility component
- Armed Forces Independence Payment
- War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- Child Disability Payment higher rate mobility component

For information about the **Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Scheme**, see **www.mygov.scot/lease-accessible-vehicles** or contact Social Security Scotland on **0800 182 2222**.

For information about the **Motability Scheme**, see **www.motability.co.uk** or call **0300 456 4566**.

Loans of mobility equipment

Some organisations loan equipment for short periods. This may be useful if you do not need a wheelchair all the time, or if you do not want to transport your own equipment when spending time away from home.

British Red Cross have wheelchairs you can rent or hire. Visit **www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/hire-a-wheelchair**.

Shopmobility provides wheelchairs and powered scooters at a low cost or for free, to allow people to access local shops and leisure facilities. Visit **www.shopmobilityuk.org**.

Buying your own equipment

It is a good idea to get independent advice about exactly what to look for. If you have been assessed as needing equipment by an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, they can advise you about what to buy.

You could also contact **Disability Information Scotland** on **0300 323 9961** or visit **www.disabilityscot.org.uk**.

Where to buy equipment

Many private companies sell disability equipment or aids for daily living, through mail order catalogues, shops and online. Some large high street chemists stock smaller items. They may also have catalogues of other equipment they can supply.

Living Made Easy provides information about a wide range of daily living equipment and where it can be bought. Visit **www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk**.

What to check if you are buying equipment

If you are buying your own equipment, especially larger items such as mobility scooters, make sure you:

- do not get pressurised into buying equipment you did not ask for, or upgrades you may not need
- carefully check the terms of any leasing or credit agreements you are offered
- check the equipment complies with British Standards and has a "Kitemark"
- try out the equipment to make sure it is comfortable and easy to use
- think about how you would transport and store large items of equipment
- find out about servicing, maintenance, repair and insurance if needed

Remote monitoring and assistance

Community alarms

Community alarm services provide a quick way to call for help at home, for example if you have a fall or suddenly start to feel very unwell. You will usually have a pull cord installed in your home that will activate the alarm, or a push button you can wear on a bracelet or pendant.

Activating the alarm will put you in touch with a call centre. Staff will ask what has happened and summon appropriate help. This could be from emergency services, friends or family who have agreed to help, or a member of staff from the service.

Some community alarms are provided by local councils, and others by private companies. Each service will have its own rules about who is eligible, what the service provides and what it costs. Your council's social work department can tell you about the services in your area.

Information about personal alarm systems is available on the **Living Made Easy** website at **www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk**.

Telecare

Telecare systems can offer more support than community alarm services. They use technology to monitor what is going on in your home.

The telecare equipment in your home may include a fall detector, epilepsy sensor, chair occupancy sensor, flood detector, gas leak alarm shut-off devices, or a sensor that lets someone know if you have left your home.

There are three types of telecare systems, which may be used together or separately:

1) **Systems that help predict problems**. These analyse information from sensors and identify changes that could be a cause for concern, such as more frequent falls. The system can then alert carers to check on you to find out what has changed.

2) **Systems that reduce risk**. This could be, for example, a sensor that switches on a light when you get out of bed during the night, to reduce the risk of falls.

3) **Systems that help manage problems if they occur**. Community alarm services are an example of this, or sensors that can be set up to alert someone if heat or smoke is detected.

Telehealth

Telehealth allows medical services to monitor things like your blood pressure, glucose level and heart and lung function, without you needing to leave your home. This can be helpful for diagnosis, or to review an existing condition. Telehealth systems can also be set up to remind you to take medications.

The Scottish Government has an online Telecare self-check tool at **www.telecareselfcheck.scot**. It provides advice on what Telehealth solutions could be helpful to you based on your answers to a few online questions.

Adaptations to your home

Adaptations can include small changes like grab rails at the front door, or a more substantial change such as a stairlift or an accessible shower. If you rent your home, you must get permission from your landlord before making any changes.

For shared buildings, all the property owners will need to be asked about any changes that affect common areas. These changes could be adaptations to shared stairs in a tenement, or adding a ramp outside a shared doorway. Not all the owners need to agree, as long as more of them agree than disagree.

For more information about adaptations to common areas, call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

The council's Scheme of Assistance

By law, every council in Scotland must have a Scheme of Assistance statement. This gives details of the help available to adapt and repair privately owned or privately rented homes. Depending on the type of work needed, this help could be in the form of information and advice, practical assistance or grant funding.

Grants may be available where structural adaptations are needed to make a property suitable for someone who has a disability. An occupational therapist must visit you to assess your needs before a grant can be given.

If you plan to make structural changes to your home, ask your council planning department whether you need **planning permission** or a **building warrant**. These must be in place before the work begins. For general repairs, or improvements such as adding energy efficiency measures, the council doesn't have to provide a grant. However, they should provide information and advice.

You can find out more about the Scheme of Assistance where you live by contacting your council, or by speaking to the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

Trusted businesses and organisations

Care and Repair can offer independent advice about repairs and adaptations to owner-occupiers, private tenants and crofters who are over the age of 60, or living with a disability.

Some local services have a handyperson you can hire for small jobs, while others can help you find a reliable trader. They may also be able to tell you about funding in your area.

To find your local service, visit **www.careandrepairscotland.co.uk** or call the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222**.

TrustMark is the only government-endorsed quality scheme for work carried out in and around your home. You can search for tradespeople registered with the scheme at **www.trustmark.org.uk** or call **0333 555 1234** (charges may apply).

Trading Standards supports a **Trusted Trader** scheme for participating local authorities in Scotland. Tradespeople are vetted and their customers can leave reviews to let others know about the service they received. You can search for tradespeople who belong to the scheme at **www.trustedtrader.scot**.

VAT relief

Disability equipment

You will not be charged VAT on any products or adaptations designed to help you with a qualifying disability or long-term illness. You will also not be charged VAT for installation, repairs, maintenance, spare parts and accessories of these products.

Products and services likely to qualify include adjustable beds, stair lifts, wheelchairs, medical appliances to help with severe injuries, motor vehicles, and building work like fitting ramps, widening doors and installing a lift or toilet.

Your disability or illness must also qualify. According to government guidance, you are eligible if any of the following apply:

- you have a physical or mental impairment that affects your ability to carry out everyday activities, for example blindness
- you have a condition that's treated as chronic (long-term) sickness, like diabetes
- you are terminally ill

The person who orders and pays for the goods must fill out a form from the supplier to claim the exemption.

For more information see the UK Government website **www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/vat-relief**.

Mobility aids

If you are over 60, you may be able to pay a reduced rate of 5% VAT on some mobility aids. These include grab rails, ramps, stair lifts, bath lifts, showers with a built-in shower seat (or just the seat itself) and walk-in baths with sealable doors.

Your supplier should know about the reduced rate and apply it; they may give you a form to complete to prove that you qualify. You qualify if:

- you are over 60 when the product is supplied or installed
- the product is installed in your home - you do not get the reduced rate if you just buy it
- the product is for a private home (not a care home)

You do not have to be paying for or ordering the equipment yourself in order for the reduced rate to apply.

For more information see the UK Government website **www.gov.uk/tax-on-shopping/mobility-aids**.

Other practical help

You will usually need to pay for any services that are not Personal or Nursing Care, even if the services are in your care plan. However, you can still ask the council to arrange services in your care plan for you, even if you will be paying for them yourself.

Cleaning and housework

One of the most common things people need help with at home is general housework and cleaning.

Costs can vary between services and will depend on what you need. You could make a list of things you would like help with. This might include general cleaning, washing and ironing or changing bedsheets, for example. If you want to keep regular costs down, you could ask for a deep clean followed by smaller tasks each week.

Gardening

Many councils offer basic gardening services, but they may only be available if you are on a low income, in receipt of a disability benefit or living in a certain type of housing.

There may be local voluntary gardening projects that could assist you. Contact your local volunteer centre to find out more.

You could employ a private gardener if you want a more personalised service. Prices will vary and it is always a good idea to shop around.

To find local cleaning or gardening services you could:

- ask friends and family for recommendations
- contact your local council for a list of approved companies
- search the **Trusted Trader** website at **www.trustedtrader.scot**

Shopping and food

If getting out to the shops is difficult, there may be a local organisation that could help.

The **Royal Voluntary Service** offers a range of services, including home visits, help with shopping and other tasks, community transport and social clubs. Visit **www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk/our-services**.

Food Train provides a food delivery service and other support services in many areas of Scotland. Call **01387 270 800** or see their website **www.thefoodtrain.co.uk**.

Meals services deliver prepared meals that are either hot or frozen. Your local council's social care department may have a list of services in your area. Meal delivery could be included as part of your care plan following a care needs assessment. You can search for meal services in your area at **mealsonwheelsuk.org**.

Ready meal suppliers will deliver frozen or chilled meals that you just need to heat up. You could search for these online or in the phone book, or ask family and friends for recommendations.

You can order your shopping online from **most supermarkets** and have it delivered for a small fee. Your local library may offer help getting online if you are not confident using a computer. You could also ask a trusted friend or relative to help you.

There may be local **lunch clubs** in your area. Many of these are run by local councils or charities.

Contact the **Age Scotland helpline** on **0800 12 44 222** to find out what help is available in your area.

Complaints about services

Social work services

If you want to complain about a social work service or decision, the first step is to complain to the service directly. They will try to respond to your complaint within 5 working days and may contact you to try and resolve things. If your complaint is complex or needs detailed investigation, it may be passed straight to the formal investigation stage.

You can request a formal investigation yourself if you are unhappy with the response to your complaint. Your request should be acknowledged within 3 working days. You should receive a decision as soon as possible, normally within 20 working days.

For more information, or if you are still unhappy with the social work department's response, you can contact the **Scottish Public Services Ombudsman**. Visit **www.spso.org.uk/how-to-complain-about-public-service** or call **0800 377 7330**.

NHS services

You should first speak to the person or organisation you have been dealing with. If this does not help and you want to make a formal complaint, you should follow the complaints procedure. This should be available on the service provider's website, or by asking a member of staff.

If you would like to speak to someone for advice on making a complaint, you can contact the Citizens Advice Bureau's **Patient Advice and Support Service** on **0800 917 2127** or visit **www.pass-scotland.org.uk**.

Consumer services

If you are not happy with equipment or care services you have purchased, get in touch with the supplier as soon as possible. If equipment is faulty then you should be able to have it repaired or replaced, or be given a refund.

For advice about your consumer rights contact **Advice Direct Scotland** on **0808 164 6000** or visit **www.consumeradvice.scot**.

Useful contacts

Age Scotland helpline 0800 12 44 222

The Age Scotland helpline provides information, friendship and advice to older people, their relatives and carers.

If you need an interpreter, call **0800 12 44 222** and simply state the language you need e.g. Polish or Urdu. Stay on the line for a few minutes and the Age Scotland helpline will do the rest.

You can call us for a copy of our publications list. You can also read, download or order publications at **www.age.scot/information**.

Living Made Easy

Provides information on a range of daily living aids, home care equipment and adaptations.

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Disability Information Scotland

Provides advice and information about services and support for people living with a disability.

0300 323 9961
www.disabilityscot.org.uk

Care Information Scotland

Provides information and advice about care services in Scotland, for yourself, someone you care for, or your future care needs.

0800 011 3200
www.careinfoscotland.scot

ADAM

An online tool developed by the Alzheimer Scotland Digital Team, providing information about technology that can help make daily living easier for people living with dementia.

www.meetadam.co.uk

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Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, websites, companies, products, services or publications in this information guide does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Age Scotland or any of its subsidiary companies or charities.

How you can help

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

All the information we provide is free and impartial. It helps older people access their rights and entitlements and can be life changing.

We are also a lifeline for older people who are feeling lonely and isolated. You can help us to support older people who need us most.

Together, we can make a difference.

Make a donation

No matter how small or large, donations make a massive difference and help us continue our important work.

- Call **03330 15 14 60**
- Visit **age.scot/donate**
- Complete the **donation form** and return by Freepost

Fundraise

Whether it's having a bake sale or running a marathon, there are so many ways to raise vital funds to support our work. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/fundraise**.

Leave us a gift in your Will

By choosing to leave us a gift in your Will, your legacy will help us to continue being there for older people for generations to come. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/legacy**.

Please donate today

Complete the form and return by Freepost to RSBS-KEHC-GBBC, Age Scotland, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR

Your details

Title: | Forename: | Surname:

Address:

City:

Postcode: | Date of birth:

By providing us with your telephone number and email address you are consenting to us contacting you via phone, text and email.

Email:

Home tel: | Mobile tel:

I WOULD LIKE TO DONATE

£75 ☐ £50 ☐ £25 ☐ Other (£) ☐

I wish to pay by (please tick):

MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ CAF ☐

CharityCard ☐ Cheque ☐ (payable to Age Scotland)

Name on Card

Card No.

Expiry date | Security code

Signature | Date

I prefer not to receive a thank you acknowledgement for this donation ☐

I would like information about leaving a gift in my Will ☐

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE MY DONATION WORTH 25% MORE

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I want Age Scotland** and its partner charities to treat all donations I have made for the four years prior to this year, and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

I am a UK tax payer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or capital gains tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Yes, I want Age Scotland to claim Gift Aid on my donations** ☐

I do not wish you to claim Gift Aid on my donations ☐ **Date**

Keeping in touch

We will stay in contact by post unless you ask us not to. We will never sell your data and we promise to keep your details safe and secure. You can change your mind at any time by emailing us on contact@agescotland.org.uk or calling us on 0333 323 2400.

You can read Age Scotland's privacy policy at **age.scot/privacypolicy**.

**Age Scotland, part of the Age Network, is an independent charity dedicated to improving the later lives of everyone on the ageing journey, within a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland. Registration Number: SC153343. Charity Number: SC010100. Registered Office: Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh, EH9 1PR

Age Scotland is the Scottish charity for older people. We work to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50 so that they can love later life.

Our vision is a Scotland which is the best place in the world to grow older.

Let's keep in touch

Contact us:

Head office
0333 323 2400

Age Scotland helpline
0800 12 44 222

Email
info@agescotland.org.uk

Visit our website
www.agescotland.org.uk

Sign up to our newsletter

Our regular newsletters by email contain details of our campaigns, services and how you can support our work.

Sign up today at **age.scot/roundup**

Follow us on social media

Our social media channels are a great way to keep up to date with our work and issues that affect older people.

We are grateful to the Scottish Government for part-funding this publication

The Scottish Government

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