

Keeping well and who can help

Mental health and wellbeing in later life



Who we are

Age Scotland is the national 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.

Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people can make the most of later life.

Our three strategic aims are to:



Help older people to be as well as they can be



Promote a positive view of ageing and later life



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.

The Age Scotland **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.

For information, advice and friendship



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



Visit [agescotland.org.uk](https://www.agescotland.org.uk)
to find out more.



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What this guide is about

Good mental health is as important in later life as it is at any other time of life. It influences how people think, how they feel and how they interact with others. It also affects how people communicate and their ability to cope with life's changes.

This guide provides information about maintaining good mental health, common mental health problems and who can help.



What is good mental health?

Mental health (or mental wellbeing) describes how someone feels and how well they cope with day-to-day life. Mental wellbeing can change from day to day, month to month or year to year.

If someone has good mental wellbeing they are able to:

- express a range of emotions
- engage with the world around them
- build and maintain positive relationships with other people
- be part of their community
- cope with the stresses of daily life
- manage times of change and uncertainty.

Keeping mentally well

Looking after mental health is just as important as looking after physical health and often they affect each other. Looking after mental health can help build 'resilience' – the ability to stay mentally well at difficult times and to bounce back.

There are ways to help protect your mental wellbeing and resilience:

Talk to people

Family and good friends can help you to deal with the stresses of life, making sure that you are included and cared for. They can also provide advice and support and offer new perspectives.

Call the **Age Scotland Friendship Line** on **0800 12 44 222** for information, friendship and advice.



Get out and about

Physical activity is good for mental health, particularly exercising outdoors. It can boost self-confidence and release ‘feel-good’ hormones. You don’t have to go to the gym; activities such as gardening, walking to the shops and swimming all count.

Our guide to **Keeping active in later life** explains why exercise is important and includes ideas for activities you might enjoy.

Enjoy yourself

It is important to take a break from the routines and pressures of everyday life to do things you enjoy. Make time to do whatever works for you, whether it is sport, meeting friends, tracing family history or treating yourself to a good book or TV series. Creative activities, such as photography, baking, gardening, writing or drawing, can also be very beneficial for mental health.

Try something new

Learning something new can give your mental health and confidence a boost. You could try to learn a new language, play a new instrument, master a new craft or participate in online activities such as games or chat groups.

If you have a skill that you think others might like to learn, you could volunteer to do demonstrations or lead sessions in local community centres or clubs.

You can find out about social and volunteering opportunities in libraries, local newspapers and online, or simply by asking around your friends and family.



Do something for someone else

Doing something for someone else by volunteering has a positive impact on mental wellbeing. It is good for self-confidence, for meeting new people and for knowing that you are helping to make a difference in your local community. Call the **Age Scotland helpline** for details of your local volunteer centre.

Relax

It is important to make time to relax, maybe by visiting somewhere peaceful, having a day at the beach or just taking time to look out of the window. Some people find that breathing exercises, yoga or meditation help them to relax.

Rest

Try to get the sleep you need. Many older people have problems sleeping, sometimes because of physical or mental health problems, or caring responsibilities that keep them awake at night. If you are having problems sleeping, speak to your GP, call **NHS Inform** on **0800 22 44 88** or visit **www.nhsinform.scot** for information and advice.

Common risks to mental health in later life

Retirement and later life can bring significant changes. Many people like having more time, and enjoy new opportunities, but some people can face new difficulties, loss or stress. These could include losing their job, losing contact with friends, difficult family relationships and managing on a reduced income.

Some of the common risks to mental health are:



Events in the past

Events in earlier life may still cast a shadow. Someone may have experienced giving up a child for adoption, domestic abuse, discrimination because of their sexuality, or a lack of respect for their cultural or spiritual values. Sometimes older people find that memories of difficult times in the past bring back the feelings of anger, fear, loss and powerlessness they had many years ago.

Alcohol

Alcohol abuse is a problem for people of all ages; older people may abuse alcohol whilst coping with bereavement, loneliness, physical ill health or loss of independence. Retirement may also provide more opportunities for drinking too much, either going to the pub every day or regularly drinking alone.

Abuse and harm

Some people in later life are at risk of abuse and harm if they need to depend on other people for help or care and they trust the wrong person. This can lead to financial, physical, mental or other forms of abuse.

Anyone who is concerned about abuse experienced by themselves or someone else can call the [Age Scotland helpline](#) on **0800 12 44 222** for information and advice about their options or see the Age Scotland guides **Elder abuse: worried about someone** and **Elder Abuse: keeping safe**

Loneliness

Loneliness can be felt by people of all ages and is harmful to both physical and mental health. As people get older the risk of loneliness may increase because of bereavement, poor health, isolation or loss of mobility.

You can call the [Age Scotland helpline](#) on for information, friendship and advice on **0800 12 44 222**.



Common mental health problems

Depression

Depression describes a range of moods, from feeling a bit low to feeling unable to cope with everyday life. It does not necessarily involve feeling sad, and can show itself as:

- lack of motivation or energy
- loss of interest in looking after yourself
- worrying about physical health problems
- being less able to cope with pain
- anxiety and worrying
- memory problems
- increased irritability.

Depression can affect anyone, and most people will get better with treatment.



Anxiety

Situations such as waiting for test results or moving home make most people anxious. When the event is over, the anxiety usually fades away. For some people the anxiety does not fade away, returns at unexpected times or lasts for a long time. Someone experiencing anxiety may:

- feel restless or on edge
- avoid visitors, appointments or phone calls
- frequently seek reassurance
- have difficulty concentrating
- quickly become annoyed.

Panic attacks

Panic attacks can happen for no clear reason and be very frightening. The physical symptoms can include:

- sweating, feeling too hot or cold
- trembling or shivering
- feeling like your heart is beating irregularly, too quickly or slowly, too hard or too softly
- chest pains, head pains and other unexplained pains
- difficulty swallowing, feeling like you have a lump in your throat or that you might choke.
- breathing very rapidly or feeling like you can't catch your breath
- feeling sick or dizzy

Panic attacks usually last between 5 and 20 minutes. The physical symptoms are caused by the body going into 'fight or flight' mode in response to something that feels like a threat. People who have severe panic attacks may feel as though they are going to faint, have a heart attack or even die. However, although the symptoms can be frightening, they are not dangerous and will begin to subside after a few minutes.



Phobias and fears

A phobia can develop when someone's fears are out of proportion to the real dangers they face.

Some common phobias are:

Social phobia - fear of being judged by others and of being embarrassed. It can be so strong that it gets in the way of doing simple everyday things. For example, someone might be afraid to pay a bill in front of a cashier at the bank or post office, or to use a public toilet.

Agoraphobia - fear of being trapped, unable to escape and not being able to get help. This might lead to avoiding situations such as being alone outside, travelling (perhaps in a car, bus, or plane) or being in a crowd.

Trauma Disorders (sometimes known as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD) - these can happen to anyone who has experienced a traumatic event such as an accident, fire or flood, has been a victim of abuse or has been in a combat situation. PTSD symptoms can affect someone for many years but can also happen for the first time in later life, for example if something brings back memories of an earlier experience.



Seeing and hearing things

Many people see or hear things that are not real, for many different reasons. They may be caused by infection (commonly a urine infection), high temperature, medication side effects, or another illness.

Hallucinations are when you see, hear, feel, smell or even taste something that doesn't exist. Hallucinations can affect all of your senses.

Illusions are different to hallucinations as they involve seeing real things in a different way from how they look in real life. For example, patterns on carpets and wallpapers may seem like they are moving, or a coat hanging on a door may look like a person.

Delusions are thoughts or beliefs that are not based on reality but which someone believes to be real. This can be very difficult to come to terms with, especially if they are having delusions about their carer or someone close to them.

Common delusions are:

- **paranoia** - they may believe they are the victim of a conspiracy, or that someone is trying to hurt or harm them
- **jealousy** - for example, thinking someone close to them is betraying them
- **special powers** – if someone believes they have special powers this could lead to them acting in an unusual or dangerous way.



Mental health and dementia

Sometimes the symptoms of a mental illness and the early signs of dementia can be very similar.

Dementia is caused when the brain is damaged by certain diseases or conditions, such as Alzheimer’s disease or a series of strokes. The symptoms that someone with dementia has will depend on the parts of the brain that are damaged and the disease that is causing the dementia.

Each person is unique and will experience dementia in their own way. Early-stage dementia can be difficult to identify, especially if someone has other physical or mental health problems too.

Age Scotland produces a series of guides which provide more information about dementia:

Reducing your risk of dementia

Living well with early stage dementia

Caring for someone with dementia

Benefits for someone living with dementia

What is dementia?

Creating an enabling home for someone living with dementia





Physical health problems that can affect mental health

Physical health problems can affect mental health in a number of ways. It can be hard to adjust to a new physical health condition, or deal with living with a long-term condition. It is quite common to find it difficult to come to terms with:

- shock at a new diagnosis
- managing new medication
- making changes to day-to-day routines
- feeling isolated if you cannot do things you used to enjoy
- worrying about the future
- having to depend on other people instead of being independent
- symptoms such as pain, tiredness, mobility and sleep problems.



If you are finding that a physical health condition is having an impact on your mental health, speak to your GP. You can also get advice and support from the many charities that exist to help people living with specific conditions. Some of these are listed below, but you can find others by visiting the **Disability Information Scotland** website at www.disabilityscot.org.uk, or by calling them on **0300 323 9961**.

Diabetes

Living with diabetes can lead to emotional stress for both the person with diabetes and their family, and it adds to the risk of depression and anxiety. If someone's mental health is not good, it may make it more difficult for them to exercise, to eat healthily or to manage their medication. Diabetes UK provides help, support and information for people with diabetes and their families.

Diabetes UK Scotland

Careline **0345 123 2399**
www.diabetes.org.uk

Stroke

If the part of the brain that normally controls emotions is damaged by a stroke, this can cause a change in the way people think, feel or behave. Some people become more emotional than usual or may suddenly have very intense reactions to people or events. They may be more angry than before, or their personality may change. Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland provide care and support for people after stroke, or diagnosis of a chest or heart condition.

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland

Advice Line nurses **0808 801 0899**
www.chss.org.uk



Parkinson's disease

Depression can be common in the early stages of Parkinson's and can be hard to identify due to the mixture of other symptoms someone may be experiencing. Some people with Parkinson's may experience hallucinations or delusions. Parkinson's UK provides information and advice about all aspects of living with Parkinson's, and has local support groups in every Scottish council area.

Parkinson's UK Scotland

Helpline **0808 800 0303**

www.parkinsons.org.uk/about-us/parkinsons-uk-scotland

Arthritis

Many people with arthritis experience depression, but this is often not diagnosed because some symptoms such as tiredness and poor sleep are common to both conditions. Arthritis pain can affect someone's self-esteem if they are frustrated that they cannot do the things they used to do. Versus Arthritis provides information, advice and support to people living with arthritis.

Versus Arthritis

0800 5200 520

www.versusarthritis.org

Thyroid problems

Sometimes, mood changes can be caused by thyroid hormone levels which are out of balance. Too much can cause anxiety, irritability and mood swings, while too little can cause slow thinking, memory problems or depression. British Thyroid Foundation provides information and support to help people understand and better manage their thyroid condition.



British Thyroid Foundation

01423 810 093

www.btf-thyroid.org

Hearing loss

Hearing loss can have a huge impact on confidence and mental health. People who are deaf or have hearing loss may feel embarrassed about not being able to hear what is being said, and may feel isolated or left out of group conversations, leading to them avoiding social events. RNID provides information and advice to anyone living with hearing loss or tinnitus, along with local support and care services.

RNID

Information line **0808 808 0123**

<https://rnid.org.uk>

Sight problems

Changes to vision can affect almost all aspects of daily life, including work, driving and leisure activities. Coming to terms with a long-term sight problem can be difficult both practically and emotionally. RNIB provides an advice service for blind and partially-sighted people, along with emotional and practical support, help with technology and accessibility aids.

RNIB Scotland

Helpline **0303 123 9999**

www.rnib.org.uk



If you are worried about your mental health

One in four people experience problems with mental health at some point in their lives, so mental health problems are not unusual.

Common symptoms include:

- loss of appetite
- feeling low or constantly anxious or worrying
- thinking negative thoughts about yourself
- irritability or moodiness
- finding it harder than usual to concentrate
- not enjoying life as much as you once did
- finding day-to-day life difficult (for example, not feeling up to washing or eating)
- trouble sleeping, or sleeping too much
- seeing or hearing things that other people do not see or hear.

Sometimes people do not recognise their own symptoms if they have built up gradually but family and friends may notice and be concerned.



If you feel very worried about your mental health, talk to someone:

- speak to someone you trust
- contact your GP surgery and arrange to speak to someone immediately
- call the **Samaritans** on **116 123** anytime day or night
- call **Breathing Space**, a confidential phone line for anyone in Scotland feeling low, anxious or depressed, on **0800 83 85 87**. Open Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am, Friday 6pm-Monday 6am.

Talking to your GP

If you have noticed changes you are concerned about in the way you are thinking or feeling, you should consider going to see your GP.

It can be hard to talk about mental health, but most people find that the help and support they receive from their GP can make a real difference.

Preparing for an appointment with your GP

Before your appointment you could make a note of what you would like to explain to make sure that you do not forget anything.

This might include:

- how you are feeling
- how your mood is affecting your day to day life
- anything from your past that is troubling you
- anything that is causing you to feel stressed just now (such as money, family or work pressures)
- physical health problems
- details of medication, herbal remedies or supplements you take.



During your appointment

A typical GP appointment is around ten minutes long. If you need more time to explain how you are feeling, ask if you can book a double appointment. You can take a family member or friend along to your appointment for support if it will help you.

It is important to be open and honest with the GP. They will listen to you and ask questions to get a full picture of your health. They may make a diagnosis based on what you have explained, or may refer you to the local mental health team.

The GP can:

- help you understand what is happening to you
- explain what support is available
- offer medication or talking therapies if appropriate
- suggest changes to your day-to-day life that could help you to feel better
- make another appointment to see how you are getting on
- refer you to a specialist if they think that would help.

If there is anything you are not sure about, ask your GP to explain it again or write it down for you.

Your visit to the GP will usually be followed by further appointments, to see how you are getting on, or how you are managing with any medications you are given. However, if you start to feel worse in between appointments, contact the GP surgery, who can arrange an extra appointment for you.



If you are worried about someone else's mental health



Many people experience issues with their mental health from time to time, and the people closest to them are often the first to realise that something isn't right.

You may have noticed changes in the way a friend or family member is behaving, or feel they are not coping as well as they usually do. They may be avoiding people, or not showing interest in things they used to enjoy. They may not be looking after themselves properly, or perhaps they may be drinking more alcohol than usual.

Retiring and getting older can bring significant changes. Many people enjoy new opportunities and relish having more time on their hands. However it is not uncommon for a change in routine, deterioration of physical health, or bereavement to become very hard to cope with.

Some older people are reluctant to talk about their feelings. This could be because they do not know why they feel the way they do, or because they do not want to admit that they are not coping as well as usual. They may feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Most people who experience difficulties with mental health make a good recovery with treatment and support, especially if they get help early on.



What stops people talking about emotions and mental health?

The words used to describe mental health issues vary, and can mean different things to different people, so it is not always easy to spot when someone might want to open up about their feelings or difficulties. Commonly-used words or expressions include:




- mental or emotional health, or ill-health
- low mood
- mental or emotional wellbeing
- stress
- anxiety
- depression.

These words may all be used as ways to describe how someone feels, their ability to cope with whatever life throws at them.

People often avoid talking about mental health problems even though they are very common, because they feel there is a stigma attached to them. However, good mental health is a hugely important part of having the best quality of life possible.

How can you help?

If someone was recovering from an operation or flu you probably would not think twice about asking how they were, but it can be more difficult to ask about a mental health problem. You may feel awkward and not know how someone is going to respond. Simple questions can often break the ice:

-  **How are you feeling?**
-  **I have been worried about you, how are you?**
-  **You seem down, is there anything I can do to help?**



Think about what you might want to say next, but the most important thing is to listen to what they say. You might need to wait for a reply, and you might not get one. They may not have expected your question. They may also find it easier to communicate by phone, text or email rather than face to face.

You can explain that you are concerned, that you care and that you are ready to listen and to keep in touch. You could also offer to help in a practical way. They may want advice about money or family problems, help with getting their shopping, or support to attend appointments.

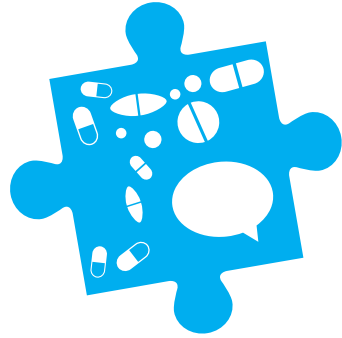
You may worry about saying the wrong thing and making someone feel worse, but usually people will be glad that you asked, or relieved to have someone who wants to listen. Try not to say things like ‘cheer up’, or ‘pull yourself together’, and don’t interrupt them to talk about your own problems if they begin opening up to you.

A mental health problem is just one part of a person, so keep talking about the things you always talked about together. Even if someone doesn’t feel ready to admit they are struggling, you can still keep an eye on them and offer support.

If you are concerned that someone you know is becoming seriously mentally unwell, or they tell you they are thinking about harming themselves, encourage them to see their GP as soon as possible. You could offer to go with them if you are both comfortable with this. For details of organisations who can provide specialist support, see the **Advice and Help** section on page 27.



Types of treatment



Medicine

If you are prescribed any medicine, your GP should tell you how it will help you, and let you know about any major side effects.

It may take a few weeks before medication helps you to start feeling better but it is important to take the treatment for the length of time recommended by the GP. If you stop taking the medication too soon, even if you are feeling better, you could begin to feel worse again.

Information about the types of medication used to treat mental health problems is available from **NHS Inform**. You can call them on **0800 22 44 88** or see their website **www.nhsinform.scot**.

Talking therapies

For some people, talking therapies work well. There are several different kinds:

Counselling gives people the chance to talk through everyday issues that may be causing problems, and to develop strategies for resolving them.

Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy is based on the idea of becoming at peace with yourself and focusing on the present, rather than being concerned about the past or the future.



Cognitive therapy (sometimes called cognitive behavioural therapy or CBT) looks at the way you think in different situations, and teaches you skills to identify and change patterns of behaviour that are causing you problems.

Psychotherapy often looks at how past experience may be affecting life now, so it may involve delving deeply into early experiences and key relationships.

For more information about talking therapies, see the NHS Inform website **www.nhsinform.scot**, or call them on **0800 22 44 88**.

Complementary therapies

Some people find that complementary therapies help them to look after their mental health. Types of complementary therapy include acupuncture, acupressure, aromatherapy, massage, reflexology, herbal medicine and homeopathy. None of these therapies claim to cure illnesses.

If you are currently having treatment for an illness, or taking any medicines, discuss any complementary therapies with your doctor to check that this will be safe for you. Be careful to choose a therapist who is qualified to help you; the British **Complementary Medicine Association** **www.bcma.co.uk** has a register of therapists who are trained, insured and follow their code of conduct and ethics.

Specialist mental health services

People who are experiencing mental health issues are often referred for support from the community mental health team. These teams are usually based at a hospital or a local community mental health centre. The team will usually include:



Community mental health nurse or community psychiatric nurse (CPN)

They work closely with other professionals and the patient to plan care and treatment. They can help with a range of mental health issues, and support people to set goals and make plans for the future.

Psychiatrist

A psychiatrist is a doctor who specialises in mental health. They will ask about someone's background, any previous treatment, and their current situation. The psychiatrist will explain their assessment and diagnosis, and what tests or treatments might be needed.

Psychologist

Psychologists are trained to understand how people think, feel and behave. They have knowledge of a range of psychological therapies. Their role is to help improve mental health, wellbeing and quality of life. They will ask the patient about their feelings, thoughts and behaviour. The psychologist will help the patient understand the problems they are experiencing and work out how to manage them.

Social worker

The social worker can assess your care and support needs, and put services in place to address your assessed needs.

For more information see the Age Scotland guides

Care and Support at home: assessment and funding
and **Care and Support at home: practical help.**

Time in hospital

Some people need to spend time in hospital to help them recover from mental illness. As well as providing medical treatment, being in hospital provides a break from everyday responsibilities and gives access to specialists such as occupational therapists and psychologists.



A hospital stay due to a mental health condition may be something that has been planned in advance, or could happen suddenly because someone has become very unwell, and is not able to manage their treatment at home, or needs to be monitored to keep them safe.

Can someone be forced to have treatment?

Usually, medical treatment cannot be given unless the patient has given their consent, unless it is a medical necessity to save their life, they are not able to consent (for example, they are unconscious), and there is nobody who can legally give consent on their behalf.

In some situations, someone with a severe mental health condition can be given ‘compulsory treatment’ under the mental health act. This may include being detained in hospital or ‘sectioned’. There are strict rules about when this can happen. The law contains safeguards to protect people’s rights, including the right to appeal and the right to have an independent advocate.

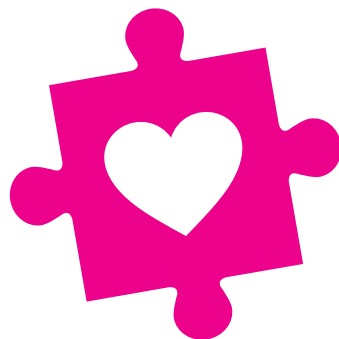
For more information about compulsory treatment and detention under the mental health act, see the **Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland** website at www.mwscot.org.uk, or contact them on **0800 389 6809**.

Support groups

Support groups can provide information, reassurance and support and the opportunity to meet people who have had similar experiences. They are often run by health professionals or by people who have experience of mental health problems.

Spiritual support

Some people find that their religious and spiritual beliefs offer comfort or support. Religious leaders often have the training and experience to support people who are in difficult situations.



Relationships

Relationships are important to mental wellbeing, but they can become more complicated if someone has a mental health problem. When people first experience a mental health problem, they may feel ashamed or embarrassed, and anticipate that other people will react badly because of the stigma associated with mental health.

If you have a mental health problem you don't have to tell friends or family if you would prefer not to, however making people aware of your illness means that there is less need to explain about bad days, medication, or going to appointments.

Sometimes, having a mental health condition can change the relationship you have with friends and family. This may be because they don't know what to say, and are worried they might make you feel worse. If a friend or partner takes on more of a caring role, it can also take a while to adjust to this new way of relating to each other. Try not to worry if things feel awkward at first; they will soon see that mental health conditions aren't something to be scared of. Reassuring them that you appreciate their support, and that you will let them know if they say something that upsets you, can really help to put them, and you, at ease.



Care, benefit and legal issues



For all the issues below you can call the **Age Scotland helpline** for advice on **0800 12 44 222**.

Care needs assessment

If you think you may need support to live comfortably and safely at home, you should contact your council's social work department for an assessment of your care needs. In some areas of Scotland such as Highland this assessment is carried out by the local health board instead.

For detailed information about care needs assessments see the Age Scotland guides **Care and support at home: assessment and funding** and **Care and support at home: practical help**.

Money worries

Balancing a household budget is hard at the best of times but having to be organised whilst unwell is even more of a challenge.

If you are struggling with your budget and bills, or your budget has been stretched by the extra costs of being unwell, the UK Government's **MoneyHelper** service can give you information and advice to help you get back on track. See their website **www.moneyhelper.org.uk** or give them a call on **0800 138 7777**.



Benefits

If you are unwell for a period of time, you may be entitled to claim some benefits. These include disability-related benefits if you have care or support needs, and means-tested benefits if you are on a low income. Working out what benefits you could get can be complicated, and many people don't claim everything they are entitled to. For advice about benefits, a copy of our **Benefits Maze** guide or a free benefit check, call the Age Scotland helpline on **0800 12 44 222**.



Help to manage your affairs

If you have a mental health condition that is making it difficult to manage your money or benefits, and you would like to find out what your options are for getting support with this, see our **Help to manage your money and benefits** guide, or call our helpline for advice.

Driving

Many people with mental health conditions are able to continue driving safely. However, some health conditions need to be reported to the DVLA. Visit **www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving** for information about conditions you must tell the DVLA about.

Some medications can cause drowsiness or have other side effects, and you may be advised not to drive if affected. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist to find out if any of your medications could affect your driving.

For more information about driving in later life, contact our helpline for a copy of our **Older drivers' guide**.





Advice and help



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, or download or order copies from our website at **www.agescotland.org.uk**.

NHS Inform

NHS Inform provides information and advice on a huge range of health and care topics.

Helpline **0800 22 44 88**

Textphone **18001 0800 22 44 88**

www.nhsinform.scot

Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH)

SAMH provides community based support services for people across Scotland with mental health problems.

Tel **0344 800 0550**

www.samh.org.uk



Support in Mind

Support in Mind Scotland supports people affected by mental illness, including family members, carers and supporters.

Tel **0300 3231545**

www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk

Breathing Space

Breathing space operates a confidential phone line for anyone in Scotland feeling low, anxious or depressed.

Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am

Weekend: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am

Tel **0800 83 85 87**

www.breathingspace.scot

LGBT Health and wellbeing

LGBT Age is a project run by LGBT Health and Wellbeing, providing information, advice and social opportunities for people over 50 who are part of the LGBT+ community.

Helpline **0300 123 2523** (Tues & Wed 12-9pm, Thu & Sun 1-6)

www.lgbthealth.org.uk

Thanks and acknowledgements

Borders Voluntary Older Peoples Service
Mood Project, Whitburn, West Lothian
Borders elder voice
Hard of Hearing Network
New Horizons Borders, Galashiels
Highland Community Carers Forum
Connecting Carers Dingwall
Age Concern, Glenrothes
Dumfries & Galloway over 50's Club
QCCC South Queensferry
Friday Bught Stop Group, Inverness
Later life Matters
Calm Project

Scope GAMH Glasgow
Alzheimer's Scotland Kelso
Alzheimer Scotland Edinburgh
SAMH
LGBT Older Age Glasgow
Support in Mind
Care for Carers Edinburgh
Queens National Nursing Institute
Human Development Scotland
Helen Galliard, Health in Mind
Age Scotland's Allied Health Professionals
Age Scotland Community Development Officers

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How you can help

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

All the information and advice we provide is free and completely impartial and in helping people access their rights and entitlements, it can be life changing.

We are an ageing population and more people than ever are coming to us for support. You can help us be there for those that need us most.



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**
- ▶ Text **LATERLIFE** to **70085** to donate £5.*



Fundraise

Whether it is having a bake sale, running a marathon or knitting small hats for the Big Knit, 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, you can help Age Scotland to continue being there for vulnerable older people in the years to come. To find out more, call **0333 323 2400** or visit **age.scot/legacy**.

* Texts cost £5 plus one standard rate message

Let's keep in touch



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 by visiting [**age.scot/roundup**](https://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.



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Age Scotland is the national 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.

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Visit our website

www.agescotland.org.uk

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