

# Support available for people experiencing memory difficulties or dementia in Sunderland

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**healthwatch**  
Sunderland



The information in this booklet may be useful for people who are experiencing memory difficulties or have a diagnosis of dementia and their carers.

Scan for the latest edition of this booklet



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Healthwatch Sunderland regularly updates this booklet. The copy you have may not be the latest version. For the most current copy, please visit [www.healthwatchsunderland.com](http://www.healthwatchsunderland.com) or call us on 0191 514 7145.

You might want to print specific sections only. Check the contents page to choose the pages you wish to print. You can also find individual booklets on particular topics on our website.

If you have information to add or notice anything outdated in the booklet, please contact us, and these will be considered.

# About Healthwatch Sunderland

## Healthwatch Sunderland is your local health and social care champion.

We make sure NHS leaders and social care decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We can also help you to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

**It is our vision** to live in a world where we can all get the health and care we need.

**It is our mission** to make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.

**Our values are to:**

- **Listen** to people and making sure their voices are heard.
- **Include** everyone in the conversation – especially those who don't always have their voice heard.
- **Analyse** different people's experiences to learn how to improve care.
- **Act** on feedback and driving change.
- **Partner** with care providers, Government, and the voluntary sector – serving as the public's independent advocate.

## Why we did this work

During our engagement with the Essence Service, which supports people in the early stages of dementia and their carers, we heard from local carers about some of their experiences. They expressed concerns about the lack of information available on local support services following their family members' diagnoses. Many felt unsure about where to go for help and were not aware of the available resources. This feedback was also recognised by the Essence Service during their feedback sessions held in Dementia Action Week 2023.

In response to this need, we collaborated with the Essence Service, carers and other local partners to create this booklet. It offers key support information for people with memory difficulties and those living with dementia.

Please be aware that some of the services mentioned, are only available to people with a dementia diagnosis.



# Introduction

Struggling with memory difficulties or receiving a diagnosis of dementia can be worrying. It can have a big effect on the person and those close to them. It can take time to adjust.

Sometimes people can feel overwhelmed if they start experiencing difficulties with their memory or at the time of getting the dementia diagnosis. This is why local carers felt there was a need for this booklet. It has information on key support services in Sunderland. We hope you find it useful.

## Memory difficulties

Most people forget things from time to time. If you keep having problems with memory, it is best to see a GP. It could be something that can be treated.

## What is dementia?

Dementia is an umbrella term for a range of conditions that affect the brain and get worse over time.

Each type of dementia stops a person's brain cells from working properly in certain areas. This affects a person's ability to remember, think and speak as well as affecting some physical functions.

Doctors use the word "dementia" to describe common symptoms that will get worse over time. This can be memory difficulties, confusion, and problems with speech and understanding.

Dementia can affect a person at any age. It is more common in people over the age of 65.

Your age and genes affect your risk of getting dementia. You cannot change this. Things you can change include keeping your mind and body active, enjoying healthier food, not smoking, drinking less alcohol, staying in touch with people, and dealing with any health problems.

This booklet will explain where you can get support locally. This support can help you to live your life well.

## Living with dementia

Age UK has written a useful guide 'Living with Dementia', which gives information around concerns following a diagnosis to support future care.



Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'Information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, the Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.

**"If you experience memory difficulties or have a dementia diagnosis there are lots of services that can help you, now and in the future!"**

# The Memory Protection Service

If a person is experiencing memory difficulties, they can refer themselves or their GP may refer them to the Memory Protection Service for an assessment.

Once the service receives your referral, they will send patients a letter. This will inform them how long they are likely to wait for their first appointment. Patients will also receive a pack containing useful information and tips on how to protect their memory while they are waiting.

## Before a diagnosis

The first appointment with the Memory Protection Service will be for an initial assessment. The current waiting times for this is 12 weeks (as of February 2025).

Patients will be given information, which includes contacts for local services, who can offer practical support.

Following the initial assessment, findings will determine what plan of care will be required.

Patients may be requested to attend for testing, which may include a head scan. They may receive appointments with other professionals. If the person is not found to have a dementia diagnosis, they will be discharged from the Memory Protection Service and signposted to the most appropriate service.

## What is mild cognitive impairment?

Mild cognitive impairment can cause noticeable but mild memory and thinking difficulties. A mild cognitive impairment is not a dementia diagnosis. People with mild cognitive impairment can function and perform tasks without any difficulties.

A mild cognitive impairment can affect some memory, problem solving, attention, thinking and some visual ability. These can vary depending on what cognitive area of the brain is affected.

## What happens if mild cognitive impairment is diagnosed?

If mild cognitive impairment is diagnosed the patient will be discharged from the Memory Protection Service. However, they can be re-referred if there is a deterioration or further concerns noted.

Please turn to the next page for more information and contact details for the Memory Protection Service.

# The Memory Protection Service – continued

## What happens if a diagnosis of dementia is received?

If you receive a dementia diagnosis from the Memory Protection Service, you will be given an information pack which includes;

- Information about the dementia diagnosed.
- Booklets about dementia and caring for people with dementia .
- Contact details for local support organisations.
- Details of their education groups, which share information on dementia and local support.

Patients with a mild to moderate diagnosis will be invited to attend Cognitive Stimulation Therapy groups. These are ran by the mental health trust, Cumbria Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust. These help patients to keep their mind active and engaged. It uses a range of activities which enhance cognitive and social functioning.

If you have any questions or want to make a referral, please contact the Memory Protection Service:

Call: 0191 566 5422

Website: [www.cntw.nhs.uk](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk) (search 'Memory Protection Service')

For information about promoting good brain health

Website: [www.brainhealth.scot](http://www.brainhealth.scot)

The Alzheimer's Society provides lots of information about memory difficulties as well as advice and support:

Call: 0333 150 3456

Website: [www.alzhiemers.org.uk](http://www.alzhiemers.org.uk)

### The National Institute of Health and Care Research

This network delivers research across 30 medical specialties, including dementia and is part of the NHS.



Their research aims to enhance the treatments, diagnosis, care or management in the future. They hold a list of names of volunteers interested in research. If there is a suitable study, those on the list may be contacted to see if they are interested in being involved.

They also have a separate Carers Register to facilitate recruitment into carer research. This research may involve gaining the views of those who currently or have previously supported people with the above conditions.

Call: 0191 246 7388 (and leave a message)

Email: [dendron@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:dendron@cntw.nhs.uk)

# Local support services



## Essence Pre-Diagnostic Service

The Essence Service has a dedicated worker to support those with symptoms of dementia who do not yet have a formal diagnosis.

Anyone with concerns about memory or other cognitive difficulties can contact the service for advice and can be supported to access assessment from local Memory Services if required.

Considering a diagnosis can be daunting, but according to figures from The Alzheimer's Society, 95% of people given a diagnosis agreed it was "better to know". Having a formal diagnosis may give access to treatments and support services that may not otherwise be available. It may give an individual the opportunity to plan for their future, and to make legal and financial arrangements as well as to discuss their wishes for their future care and treatment.

The Essence Pre-Diagnostic Service offers emotional and practical support during a vulnerable time. The service can support with information on symptoms and tips for coping, and support to access other services that may be useful. Individuals can be monitored until they have an outcome from their assessment, and if a diagnosis is given, they can be referred on for ongoing support from the Essence Dementia Team.

For more information about the Pre-diagnostic Service please contact:

Call: 0191 522 1310

Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)



Or, pop into the Essence Service Centre at: Sir Thomas Allen Centre, Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park, Sunderland SR3 2ND

# Local support services



For people with memory difficulties or a dementia diagnosis, it is important to keep doing enjoyable activities. This could be a hobby or a favourite activity.

It is also important to stay in contact with family and friends and get to know new people. This includes people who also have difficulties with their memory or have a diagnosis of dementia and their loved ones.

In this section is some information on organisations in Sunderland that can offer support. These organisations can help people to get out and about, take part in activities and improve a person's wellbeing.

## Sunderland GP Alliance Social Prescribers

Social prescribers work with people to find out 'what matters to them'. The team will then support people in their own community.



The social prescribing service can help people with housing worries, money worries, being more physically active, connecting with others and support with mental health and physical wellbeing.

You can self refer to the service by visiting: [www.sunderlandhealthandwellnesshub.nhs.uk](http://www.sunderlandhealthandwellnesshub.nhs.uk) (visiting the 'Social Prescriber' section).

You can also ask the receptionist at your GP practice to refer you to the Sunderland GP Alliance Social Prescribing Service.



**FREE support, friendship groups and trips out and about for people experiencing Dementia, their families and carers.**

Weekly at the Chester's Pub,  
Chester Road, Sunderland SR4 7DR

**Tuesday between 10.30am and 1pm**

Washington group every 3rd Friday of the month

Weekly Home Visiting/Befriending Service and monthly  
Peer Support Group for people with dementia

For more information  
Email: [actionondementiasunderland@gmail.com](mailto:actionondementiasunderland@gmail.com)  
Call: 07740 111 182

Also, check out the Wellbeing Activity section for information about local groups and activities.





## Local support services

### The Essence Service, Age UK Sunderland's dementia hub

This service works with local partners to offer free and dedicated services for people who have been diagnosed with mild to moderate dementia and their carers.

The team offer social prescribing support. This gives information in areas around health, wellbeing and legal issues. They also make sure people are aware of how to access other services which may be useful to them.

People with a mild to moderate dementia diagnosis receive emotional support and support from others with similar experiences. This helps them to understand and deal with their diagnosis in a positive way.

Evidence suggests that keeping active and stimulated when a person has mild to moderate dementia is essential. It helps to slow down its progression and maintains wellbeing. With this in mind, the Essence Service offers a variety of activities. These are available from its Doxford Park centre in Sunderland and in the wider community.

The Essence Service also recognises the vital role of carers and the effect caring for someone with dementia can have. They support carers throughout the dementia journey. As the dementia progresses staff continue to help carers. They offer person centred support, social prescribing and peer support groups.

Peer support groups are a chance for carers to join other carers and talk about their experiences. This is done in a relaxed confidential environment. Sharing experiences with other carers can help to reduce feelings of guilt, loneliness and isolation. It also enables carers to access information and support during and, after the caring role ceases.

  
**Essence  
Service**

**Sunderland's Dementia Hub**

After a dementia diagnosis, the  
Essence Service is the first port of call for  
people in Sunderland with mild to moderate  
dementia and those who care for them in  
their own home.

**Call: 0191 522 1310**  
**Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)**  
**Website: [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)**

 **Sunderland  
ageUK**  
Let's change how we age

# Planning for the future

Planning for legal matters related to memory difficulties or dementia should ideally take place in the early stages. The person can then still express their wishes and understand the implications. This will help the person feel more in control. This includes:



- **Making a will:** If possible, this should be done with the guidance of legal experts to make sure it is valid.
- **Appointing a power of attorney:** Choosing a trusted person or persons to handle financial and healthcare decisions when a person can no longer do so.
- **Advance care planning:** Discussing your wishes for medical care and end-of-life decisions with healthcare professionals and loved ones.

**Making a will:** The ability to create a will largely depends on a person's mental capacity. Dementia is a condition that gets worse over time. It affects cognitive functions, such as memory and the ability to make choices. As the dementia advances, it can change a person's ability to fully understand the implications of a will.

**Early stages:** In the early stages of memory difficulties or dementia, people may still be able to make a will. At this stage it is very important to involve legal professionals and medical experts to assess their capacity. This will make sure the process is conducted correctly.

**Mild to advanced stages:** As dementia progresses, the ability to create a will may diminish. At this point, it's essential to prioritise the person's best interests. If they cannot understand the will's implications, it is best to seek alternatives.

Once you have made a will, it is usually stored with a solicitor, and you get a copy. Most solicitors charge a small fee for this. You can keep the will at home if you prefer. It is important to tell someone you trust where it is kept. This will help them to find it when it is needed.

**The probate service can also keep your will for you for a fee. Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search 'how to store a will with the probate service').**

Age UK have written a guide on wills and estate planning. It has practical advice for making and updating your will.



You can order this and other useful guides and factsheets by calling the advice line or you can print them off yourself from their website.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'Information and advice' and scroll down to 'free booklets and online information').

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, The Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.

# Planning for the future

## Power of attorney

Power of attorney is a legal document that allows a designated person (the attorney) to make decisions on behalf of someone else (the donor).



There are two types of power of attorney:

1. **Property and financial affairs power of attorney:** This allows the attorney to manage the person's financial matters, such as paying bills, selling assets, and making investments. It can help to ensure the person's financial well-being. This is important if they can no longer handle their own affairs.
2. **Health and welfare power of attorney:** This allows the attorney to make decisions about the person's healthcare, living arrangements, and medical treatments. It helps decisions be made that align with the person's wishes. This is important when the person can no longer express them.

You can only set up a lasting power of attorney when you have mental capacity. Once someone has lost capacity, it is too late and an application to the Court of Protection will be needed.

To apply for power of attorney, visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search 'power of attorney'. You can also download the application forms from this website.)

Citizens Advice can also help you. Call their national helpline on 0800 144 8848.

There is usually a cost to register the lasting power of attorney application. Although some people on certain benefits can get a reduction or maybe exempt.

Age UK has written a guide which explains how to appoint someone to make decisions on your behalf if you're no longer able to make or communicate your decisions. It covers, the different types of power of attorney, the process of choosing an attorney, the different ways of communicating your wishes and what happens if you haven't set up a power of attorney.



It also lists useful organisations that offer impartial information and advice about setting up a power of attorney.

They also have an advocacy service which can offer help and support with power of attorney and a range of other issues, such as the other subjects mentioned in this section of the booklet.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice' then scroll down to free booklets and online information).

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, The Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.

# Planning for the future



## Advance care planning

Advance care planning is the process when people discuss their preferences for medical care and end-of-life decisions with healthcare professionals and loved ones.

It involves preparing for future decisions about medical care when a person becomes seriously ill or unable to let you know their wishes. Having meaningful conversations with loved ones is the most important part of advance care planning. Many people also choose to put their preferences in writing by completing documents called advance directives.

Advance directives are legal documents that offer instructions for medical care and only go into effect if the person cannot let you know their wishes.

The two most common advance directives for health care are the advanced decision (otherwise known as a living will) and the durable power of attorney for health care.

## Advanced decisions or a living will

Whilst they still have mental capacity, a person may make an advance decision or a living will to refuse certain medical treatment. An advance decision would become relevant if and when there comes a time when someone is unable to make or communicate their own decisions.

## Is an advance decision (living will) legally binding?

Advance decisions are legally binding, so health professionals must follow them – as long as they meet certain requirements.

### Top tip

**If you have to go to the Court of Protection, this can take time and be costly. As a result, it is important to have the power of attorney in place.**



# Planning for the future

## This is me

Developed by the Alzheimer's Society 'This is Me' is a simple leaflet. It is aimed at anyone receiving professional care who is living with dementia or going through delirium or other communication difficulties.



It records details about those who can't easily share information about themselves. Such as:

- A person's cultural and family background.
- Important events, people and places from their life.
- Their preferences and routines.

The leaflet can be used in any setting. At home, in hospital, in respite care or in a care home. It helps health and social care professionals better understand who the person really is. Care delivered can then match the person's needs.

This can help to reduce distress for people living with dementia and their carers. It can also help to overcome problems with communication. As well as stop more serious conditions such as malnutrition and dehydration.



Call: 0333 150 3456

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) (search 'this is me').

## Lions Club Charity, Message in a Bottle

Lions Club Message in a Bottle scheme is a simple idea designed to encourage people to keep their basic personal and medical details on a standard form and in a common location – the fridge.

It saves the emergency services valuable time if they need to enter a property in an emergency situation.

If you have any questions about this or would like a bottle for you or a family member, please contact Healthwatch Sunderland.



Call: 0191 514 7145

Email: [healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net)

Website: [www.healthwatchsunderland.com](http://www.healthwatchsunderland.com) (search 'message in a bottle').



## Non means tested benefits

People of state pensionable age may be entitled to attendance allowance (please see page 14). People under state pensionable age, may be entitled to personal independence payment. Once you get either attendance allowance or personal independence payment, you may be entitled to a discount of council tax based on your mental impairment.

## Get help and advice

There are support organisations across Sunderland that can help with free information, advice and guidance on welfare support, debt, employment, and housing matters plus help with food (such as local food banks). Please see the table below:

Area	Locations	Support Service
<b>Coalfields</b>	Copt Hill, Hetton, Houghton, Shiney Row	<b>Shiney Advice and Resource Project (ShARP)</b> Call: 0191 385 6687 Email: <a href="mailto:advice@shineyadvice.org.uk">advice@shineyadvice.org.uk</a>
<b>East</b>	Doxford, Hendon, Millfield, Ryhope, St Michael's.	<b>Citizens Advice Sunderland</b> Call: 0808 278 7950 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@citizensadvicesunderland.co.uk">enquiries@citizensadvicesunderland.co.uk</a>
<b>North</b>	Castle, Fulwell, Redhill, Southwick, St Peter's	<b>Sunderland West Advice Project (SWAP)</b> Call: 0191 5142930 Email: <a href="mailto:swap@pallionactiongroup.co.uk">swap@pallionactiongroup.co.uk</a>
<b>Washington</b>	Washington Central Washington East Washington North Washington South Washington West	<b>Shiney Advice and Resource Project (ShARP)</b> Call: 0191 385 6687 Email: <a href="mailto:advice@shineyadvice.org.uk">advice@shineyadvice.org.uk</a>
<b>West</b>	Barnes, Pallion, Sandhill, Silksworth, St Anne's, St Chad's	<b>Sunderland West Advice Project (SWAP)</b> Call: 0191 5142930 Email: <a href="mailto:swap@pallionactiongroup.co.uk">swap@pallionactiongroup.co.uk</a>
<b>City wide</b>	All areas of Sunderland, including Washington and the Coalfields	<b>Essence Service Information and Advice Service for people registered with their service</b>  Call: 0191 522 1310
<b>City wide</b>	All areas of Sunderland, including Washington and the Coalfields	<b>Age UK Sunderland Front Door Service</b> Available for people aged 50+  Call: 0191 565 9045

This page has been written by a local gentleman with lived experience of caring for a loved one with dementia. You will note Age UK factsheets are often mentioned throughout this booklet. The gentleman found these a valuable guide of information for him.



**“They are well written, accurate, easy to read, and are kept up to date.  
They are available online or in a booklet.”**

## Attendance allowance

Anyone with a dementia diagnosis, over the state pension age can apply for attendance allowance. It is a benefit which is not means-tested and is not taxable. People who need help with daily living, including personal care, day or night because of physical or mental disability i.e. dementia can apply for the benefit. To qualify, the disability must have lasted for at least 6 months. You can spend the allowance how you choose.

It is best to make the claim as early as possible. The allowance can not be backdated. Currently, there are two weekly rates of benefit. The lower rate at £73.90 and the higher rate at £110.40. The higher rate is for those who need care day and night. Benefits are paid every 4 weeks.

If the person receiving the benefit is admitted into hospital the benefit will stop after 28 days. If the person receiving the benefit goes into a care home that is funded in total or partly by the local authority, then the benefit will stop after 28 days. The Department of Work and Pensions must be informed.

## Personal Independence Payment

If you are under the state pension age, you might want to think about applying for personal independence payment.

## Pension credit – extra money if you are on a low income

Pension credit is a means tested benefit for older people. This means that what you get depends on your income and your savings.

### More money in your pocket

Age UK have written a useful guide which explains the different benefits that are available and how to claim them.



Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) and search 'information and advice' (and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

Or for personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Essence Service, Sunderland's Dementia Hub on: 0191 522 1310.

The finance section was written in April 2025.  
If you notice anything which needs updating,  
please contact  
Healthwatch Sunderland on 0191 514 7145



## Council tax reduction

If a person has a dementia diagnosis they are exempt from paying council tax. To qualify the person must receive certain benefits, below are some examples:

- Incapacity benefit
- Attendance allowance
- Personal independence payment
- Disability Living allowance.

If other adults live with someone who has a dementia diagnosis, they may get a 25% discount off their bill, if only one person is counted for Council Tax. This will be from the date of the diagnosis.

If the person with dementia goes into residential care, it is important to let the council know, as the discount will no longer apply. However, if the spouse or partner remains as the only adult living at the property, they can still claim a 25% discount.

If you provide care for someone who lives with you or if you are a resident care worker, you may also qualify for a 25% discount.

For more information contact Sunderland City Council:

Call: 01919 520 5551

Website: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'severely mentally impaired').

## Private pensions/annuities

If the person with dementia has a private, personal or occupation pension or a private annuity, and they are married or in a civil partnership, they can 'gift' 50% of the pension to their partner who lives at home.

Social services will not include this amount when doing their financial assessment. (For more information about this and other financial matters, see Age UK factsheet number 39.)

For more information about this:

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).



## Top tip

**When applying for a council tax reduction, allow time for the claim to be processed. If after this time it still hasn't been processed, ask your GP surgery for a copy of the doctor's confirmation that was sent to the council. This will help you find out if the delay is from the council or the GP.**





## When you own your own home – joint ownership

Joint ownership means that two or more people own a property together. This often happens when a couple buys a home. They do not have to be married to share ownership. When one of the joint owners dies, the property automatically goes to the surviving owner. There is no need for the probate process. Even if the deceased owner had a will that stated their share should go to someone else. Therefore, the entire property becomes part of the survivor's estate.

This can affect care cost assessments and may have inheritance tax implications when the surviving owner dies.

Another type of joint ownership is called tenants in common. Here, two or more people own a property but hold different shares. For example, one person might own 60%, while the other owns 40%. If one of the owners dies, their share will go to whoever they name in their will.

A solicitor or the Land Registry can help with this change. The Land Registry also provides advice and guidance.

**Call: 0300 006 0411**

**Website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)** (search 'land registry').

## Deprivation of assets

A person may want to transfer an asset to someone else in order to avoid it being used to pay for their care. This is called a deliberate deprivation of assets. For example, someone may transfer money into someone else's bank account, or transfer ownership of a property into someone else's name.

When deciding whether a deprivation of assets has taken place, the local authority will consider:

- The motivation for disposing of the asset.
- Whether they had a reasonable expectation of needing care and support at the time.
- Whether there was an expectation of needing to contribute to the cost of their care.

Any attempt not to include an asset in the financial assessment may be seen by the local authority as a deliberate deprivation of assets. If this happens, the local authority may assess the person as if they still owned the asset.

For more information see Age UK factsheet number 40 'deprivation of assets in social care'



**Call: 0191 514 1131**

**Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland)** (search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

**For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, The Essence  
Service on: 0191 522 1310**



## Banking

Banks are expected to take extra care with their vulnerable customers including people with a dementia diagnosis. They are expected to make sure people's needs are met fairly and to spot early signs of vulnerability. They should act to prevent risk to these customers emerging or growing.

The following article 'bank accounts/investments held 'jointly' has been written by a local gentleman with lived experience of caring for a loved one with dementia.

### Bank accounts/investments held 'jointly'

If the person with dementia has joint bank accounts or other assets held jointly, when carrying out an assessment social services can only take into account the share belonging to them. It will be assumed that the person's share is half (50%) of these joint assets, unless the person can show otherwise.

A carer may want to split the proceeds honestly and with integrity into two separate accounts. Assuming the carer has lasting power of attorney, then the account for the person with dementia will name the carer as attorney for the partner with dementia and the carer will then have a separate account in their name.

### Tips for help with managing money

Things you can do now, to help with finances:

- To make sure bills are paid on time set up standing orders or direct debits.
- Have all your income, such as pensions and benefits paid into your bank account.
- Think about getting a chip and signature card. You only need to supply your signature rather than a personal identification number (PIN).
- Set up a third-party mandate. This gives another person access to your bank account. You can state how much access to give. An example of this would be a set amount for the weekly shop.

The information 'Tips for help with managing money' was taken from the NHS website. To read more visit: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) (search 'dementia and managing money').

### Top tip

**Following a dementia diagnosis book an appointment at your bank. They can discuss any worries you have and what to do to keep you and your money safe.**



After a diagnosis of dementia is made, as soon as practical, advice should be sought from the local authority to establish when:

- A financial needs assessment should be made for the person with dementia
- A carer's assessment to consider whether or not the carer can manage the task of caring or if some further intervention is required

It may be a little while before these assessments are made.

*"Unfortunately, and inevitably, dementia progresses, and the following notes relate to that point in time when the person with dementia must enter residential care.*

*This is a horrible moment for both the person with dementia and the carer. The carer will almost certainly feel guilty, but this is a misplaced emotion. You have done your very best and have, now, to admit that you are no longer able to provide the level of care your loved one needs, so you are handing over to a professional team who are better able to give the care needed."* (Local carer)

## The financial assessment

The following information 'the financial assessment' has been written by a local gentleman with lived experience of caring for a loved one with dementia.

As dementia progresses the need for permanent residential care may increase. The local authority has a duty of support and must carry out a needs assessment to establish 'eligible needs'.

How much people pay towards this care is determined by a financial assessment. This will consider your income, savings, and assets, reviewed in a personal budget.

If this totals more than £23,250 (as of March 2025) you will be regarded as a 'self-funder'. This means people will have to pay the full cost of care home fees until your capital reduces to, or below that figure. Following this the local authority will assist with the cost of fees. The local authority will establish your assessed weekly income as follows:

- Benefits (eg attendance allowance).
- Pensions (eg state retirement pension).
- Employment pensions x ½ (on the assumption that the other half has been gifted to your partner).
- Tariff income – where your savings and investments are valued at more than £14,250 a notional 'income' of £1 is computed for every £250 above £14,250 (eg savings = £15,250 then national or tariff income = £4 per week i.e. £1,000 divided by 250 equals £4 of notional income).

# Finances

## The financial assessment' continued



If your capital is £14,250 or less, then it must be wholly disregarded from the financial assessment.

These factors then, establish your gross weekly income. Against this amount are set expenditures which can include the expenses of utilities such as gas, electric, and water rates.

You must be left with an amount of no less than what is called a 'guaranteed minimum income'. Currently, this amount is £30.15 per week. This is subject to annual variation and is usually referred to as a personal expenses allowance.

Where you do not qualify for pension credit, guarantee credit, or savings credit then the local authority must also disregard a further £6.95 of weekly income. Your personal expense allowance is then £37.10 per week.

The purpose of the personal expense allowance is to ensure that you have money to spend on personal items. Items that are not part of personal care including toiletries, birthday gifts, newspapers & magazines and haircuts etc. Statutorily it is not to be used to cover any part of the persons care and support by the local authority

## Ongoing property expenses when the person has gone into care

It is important to note that Annex C, Section 46 of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance states:

'There may be some circumstances where it would not be appropriate for the local authority to leave a person only with the personal expenses allowance after charges. For example:

*d) Where a person's property has been disregarded the local authority should consider whether the PEA (personal expense allowance) is sufficient to enable the person to meet any resultant costs. For example, allowances should be made for fixed payments (like mortgages, rent and Council Tax), building insurance, utility costs (gas, electricity and water, including basic heating during the winter) and reasonable property maintenance costs.'*

For further information visit: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search care and support statutory guidance).





## Court of Protection

This is administered by HM Courts & Tribunals Service. The Court of Protection makes decisions on financial or welfare matters for people who can't make decisions for themselves due to their mental capacity.

The Court of Protection is responsible for:

- Deciding whether someone has the mental capacity to make a particular decision for themselves.
- Appointing deputies to make ongoing decisions for people who lack mental capacity
- Permitting people to make one-off decisions on behalf of someone else who lacks mental capacity.
- Handling urgent or emergency applications where a decision must be made on behalf of someone else without delay.
- Making decisions about a lasting power of attorney or enduring power of attorney and considering any objections to their registration.
- Considering applications to make statutory wills or gifts.
- Making decisions about when someone can be deprived of their liberty under the Mental Capacity Act.

Most cases are heard by district judges and a senior judge. Sometimes they can be heard by High Court judges. Cases can sometimes be transferred to a local court for hearing.

**Call:** 0191 205 8750

**Email:** [COPNewcastle.newcastle.countycourt@justice.gov.uk](mailto:COPNewcastle.newcastle.countycourt@justice.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search 'court of protection forms').

**For information of the fees attached to court of protection visit:** [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search 'court of protection fees').

## Direct payments

If Sunderland City Council assesses a person and finds they need care and support, they will offer a personal budget. This budget amount depends on the person's eligible needs at that time. The council will conduct a financial assessment. This will decide if the person must contribute towards their care costs. If a contribution is required, this amount will be deducted from the direct payment the council makes.

The council offer direct payments to allow people to buy care and support services to meet their eligible needs.

If a person or someone they care for receives help from adult services, a direct payment can be requested. This allows them to buy the care and support services to meet their eligible care needs, rather than getting services directly from them. It puts the person in control and gives more choice about how care and support is arranged and delivered. They can choose how to use the money in the direct payment. As long as it is spent on things that meet the persons personal care needs.

For more information contact Sunderland City Council:

**Call:** 0191 520 5551

**Website:** [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'direct payments').



## NHS continuing healthcare

Most people have to pay something towards the care they receive. Some people with ongoing significant health needs can get their care paid for through NHS continuing healthcare.

NHS continuing healthcare is a package of care for people who are assessed as having a 'primary health need'. It's arranged and funded by the NHS.

If you receive care in your own home the NHS covers the cost of the care and support. You need to meet your assessed health and associated care needs. This includes personal care such as help with washing and getting dressed.

If you receive NHS continuing healthcare in a care home the NHS pays your care home fees.

**Speak to your healthcare provider, doctor or social worker if you think you might be eligible for NHS continuing healthcare.**

For more information see Age UK factsheet number 20 'NHS continuing healthcare and NHS-funded nursing care'.



Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (Search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, the Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.

## Continuing healthcare – advocacy

If you need an assessment, or you're assessed as eligible for NHS continuing healthcare an advocate can make sure you have the relevant support to have your wishes, preferences and views heard.

To make a referral for yourself, friend or family, or someone you care for professionally, please contact VoiceAbility directly.

Call: 0300 303 1660

Email: [helpline@voiceability.org](mailto:helpline@voiceability.org)

Website: [www.voiceability.org](http://www.voiceability.org) (search 'continuing healthcare advocacy').

# Social care

Supporting people to stay safe, well, and independent with the right support in place.



## Adult social care

Adult social care aims to help people stay independent, safe and well. Enabling them to live the life they want. Teams offer information and advice to residents, their carers and families, on many care and support services.

If you need care and support, there are a number of organisations that may be able to help you.

The Links for Life website: [www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk](http://www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk) provides information about services and activities.

**Sunderland  
City Council**

**Links for Life  
Sunderland**

**Making life-changing  
connections in your community**

Linking people to activities, groups and services that  
make a lasting difference to their health and wellbeing.

[www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk](http://www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk)

Adult social care funds various dementia friendly services. Some of these are support at home, day services, extra care and residential services.

If you think you need help with daily living, you can find out by completing a self assessment form or by making a referral for an assessment.

Complete an adult social care self assessment form on the following website:  
[www.adultsportal.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.adultsportal.sunderland.gov.uk) (click on 'self assessment').

If you are unable to complete the assessment, you can make a referral online:  
[Referral for an assessment – Sunderland City Council](#)

For those without online access, please call: 0191 5205552

If you need support in your role as a carer, you can request this by contacting the Sunderland Carers Centre.

Call: 0191 5493768  
Email: [contactus@sunderlandcarers.co.uk](mailto:contactus@sunderlandcarers.co.uk)  
Website: [www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

## Advocacy support

If you do not have any family or friends who can help you during your involvement with Adult Social Care, you may be able to get support from a formal advocate, contact Voiceability.

Call: 0300 303 1660  
Email: [helpline@voiceability.org](mailto:helpline@voiceability.org)  
Website: [www.voiceability.org](http://www.voiceability.org) (search 'Sunderland').

# Social care



## Assistive technology

Assistive technology is being used in Sunderland to manage different parts of people's care, safety, health and wellbeing. This can include things like Google, Alexa and Siri. As well as smart lightbulbs and heating, home sensors and trackers.

They have many extra benefits, in addition to what they were designed for. These can support people to live well and independently. They can also support people who have a caring role for someone.

Contact Sunderland City Council to find out how this equipment can help you: **Sunderland City Council**

Call: 0191 5205552

Website: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'assistive technology').

## Telecare

Telecare service is a 24 hour a day, every day of the year service. It helps people to stay independent and living safely at home. A button is placed on the wrist or around the neck of the person. If they have a fall or need the emergency help, the person activates the button and support will arrive to their home. It gives peace of mind to the person and their family.

Telecare offer many kinds of equipment, which is linked to Sunderland City Council's highly trained staff. They help people when they are in difficulty and send a worker to their home if needed.

If you would like more information about the telecare service, get in touch with Sunderland City Council:

Call: 0191 520 5000

Website: [www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk) (click on 'services' then 'telecare')



# Social care



## Specialist equipment

Sunderland Care and Support, community equipment service supplies and fits equipment and minor adaptations to a person's home. This can help people to live safely and independently at home.

Equipment is free and provided on a long-term loan basis. This is following an assessment from a nurse, occupational therapist, or physiotherapist.

If you want advice about buying your own equipment, the service can put you in touch with an occupational therapist who can help.

You can find out what equipment would make your life easier by using a website: 'AskSARA'.

For more information contact Sunderland Care and Support:

**Sunderland  
City Council**

Call: 0191 5205000

Email: [info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:info@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

Website: [www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk) (search 'community equipment').

To discuss equipment, you would like to buy yourself call: 0191 561 4333

If you already have been provided with equipment from the community equipment service and this equipment has broken, or you need to return your equipment call: 0191 520 5552.

## The community therapy service

The community therapy service helps people live a more enjoyable and independent life.

There are a number of teams who work with people who have disabilities, including dementia. They help them to find ways of living independently by learning new skills, adapting their home environment, or finding specialist equipment to keep people safe, well and fulfilled.

The team can support people living in their own homes or in care homes. They can provide rehabilitation including occupational therapy, physiotherapy and falls management. They can support to people who need rehousing as a result of their disability or long-term health condition.

An assessment from the community therapy service may facilitate access to specialist equipment, assistive technology and adaptations to your home.

To make a referral online click the follow link: [Referral for an assessment – Sunderland City Council](#)

For those without online access, please call: 0191 5205552

# Physical health



Looking after your physical health can be difficult, but it can have a significant impact on your general wellbeing.

Many people, including those living with dementia are also living with long-term health problems, such as circulatory or respiratory issues and sight or hearing loss. It is equally important that these conditions are well managed too.

In many cases, approaches to a healthy lifestyle can benefit both brain and physical health. The following are some top priorities:

- Recognise and manage hearing loss.
- Recognise and treat depression.
- Stay active.
- Stop smoking.
- Maintain blood pressure within a healthy range (your GP practice can check this for you).
- Detect and treat high blood pressure and cholesterol (your GP practice can check this for you).
- Maintain a healthy weight and BMI.
- Reduce alcohol consumption.
- Maintain social relationships and avoid becoming isolated.
- Have regular sight checks and treatment as necessary.

## What to expect from your GP practice

If a person receives a dementia diagnosis, an annual review should be carried out at their GP practice. Not all GP practices will contact the person to make an appointment for this. Make sure you contact them to make an appointment.

Although there may be very little medical intervention needed, every GP practice in Sunderland have social prescribers working with them. They can help with a range of things. (Please see section on Local Support Services for information on Sunderland GP Alliance Social Prescribers).

Always keep your GP surgery's telephone number by your telephone, just in case!

### NHS 111

If you're worried about a symptom and not sure what help you need, NHS 111 can tell you what to do next.  
Visit: [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk) or call 111

### In an emergency

For a life-threatening emergency call 999



## Sunderland Health **NHS** & Wellness Hub

**Not sure where to go for health and wellness advice?**

**Trusted NHS health information is just a click away...**

Visit the new Sunderland Health and Wellness Hub online and find lots of information about local healthcare services.

**Find us online at**  
**[www.shwh.co.uk](http://www.shwh.co.uk)**



SCAN ME





## Eye health checks

Although dementia does not directly affect the eyes themselves, it can impact how the brain processes visual information.

Getting eyes checked regularly and correcting any additional vision problems can help maintain a high quality of life. This is especially important for those with dementia.

Eyes checks should take place every two years or as often as the optician recommends. If you notice any changes in your vision, you should get them checked as soon as possible. Some opticians offer home visits.

## The importance of hearing tests

Evidence suggests that managing hearing loss could reduce or delay the impact of dementia. It is important we check our hearing regularly.

Once hearing loss is diagnosed, it can be managed with hearing aids. Hearing aids can significantly increase people's ability to take part in everyday life and communicate with friends and family. This helps improve people's wellbeing. This potentially reduces the risk of depression and social isolation and slows cognitive decline.

## How to get an NHS hearing test

You can get a free NHS hearing test. A GP may refer you to a hearing specialist (audiologist) who can do the test. It could take a few weeks to see a specialist so it might be quicker to get tested somewhere else. This could be at a large pharmacy or opticians. This is often free.

## Incontinence

Many people who are living with dementia experience incontinence of the bladder and/or bowel which can be daunting.

In Sunderland we have an NHS Bladder and Bowel Service. A nurse led team offer support with all aspects of continence promotion, assessment and treatment. They can also support with the management of continence related issues of both the bladder and the bowel. After assessment they can offer various incontinence products to best suit the person's needs.

**Contact your GP practice for a referral into the service.**

## Dental care

A person with dementia may not be able to maintain a daily tooth and mouth cleaning routine without careful supervision. Toothache may be suffered but the person may not be able to tell anyone that they are in pain. The carer must be alert for signs. This could include; holding their face, grimacing and appearing sensitive to hot or cold food and drink.

Dentures can, eventually become uncomfortable and the person should not be pressured into wearing them. In these circumstances, food choices may then be limited. Softer foods can be considered, which need less chewing.

It is important to have regular check-ups with an NHS or private dentist.

# Physical health



## Taking your medications

It is important that medications are taken as prescribed. People may need support to do this.

Some medications need to be taken at set intervals or a specific time of day. With or after food, or on an empty stomach.

Things people can do to help them remember are:

- Visual reminders like a wall chart or a label stuck to the cabinet where it is kept.
- A pill organiser with separate compartments for times of day and days of the week.
- Alarms or alerts on the person's phone .
- Voice reminders, e.g. using a smart speaker.
- Smartphone apps.
- Linking taking the medication with part of their daily routine, e.g. teeth brushing. This will help to make it easier to remember.

In some cases, pharmacies can supply tablets in a dosette box. This is a pre-filled pill organiser that clearly shows the times and days when each medication needs to be taken.

**Ask your regular pharmacy for details.**

## Podiatry (foot care)

Podiatrists specialise in helping people improve their mobility, independence and quality of life. They do this by assessing, diagnosing and treating foot and lower leg problems.

Sunderland's local podiatry department provides a range of footcare services in a number of local health centres and primary care centres in Sunderland and a Sunderland Royal Hospital.

Home visits are offered to patients who are totally housebound.

**Contact your GP practice for a referral into the service.**

### The Falls service

This service is based at The Galleries Health Centre, Washington, and sees patients who have recently had a fall, are at risk of falling, or struggle with their mobility. They carry out an assessment for falls or the risk of falls, including for those with dizziness or balance problems.

**Your GP can refer you to this service.**



If you live or work in Sunderland, our stop smoking service can offer you an individual quit programme for up to 12 weeks.

You will be offered weekly tailored advice and support from a Specialist Practitioner to help plan and manage your quit attempt.

**Are you ready to stop smoking?**

**Phone:** 0191 567 1057

**Email:** [sunderland.stopsmokingsservice@nhs.net](mailto:sunderland.stopsmokingsservice@nhs.net)

**Website:** [sunderlandstopsmokingsservice.co.uk](http://sunderlandstopsmokingsservice.co.uk)

# Physical health



## District nursing service

The district nursing service is a team of nurses consisting of district nursing specialist practitioners, community staff nurses, and health care assistants. They provide nursing care for housebound patients. The district nurses are supported by the specialist frailty nurses, social workers and the diagnostic team. The district nurses have a close working relationship with GPs, specialist palliative care services, tissue viability, continence service, equipment services, social services and other multidisciplinary and voluntary services.

The district nursing team provides nursing care to the housebound in:

- Palliative care – delivering highly skilled care at end of life and palliative support, allowing people to remain at home and die in their preferred place of care.
- Controlled drug administration and symptom management.
- Assessment and management of wounds.
- Bladder and bowel care, catheterisation and continence assessment.
- Diabetic management and support around insulin administration.
- Holistic assessment, care planning, monitoring and review of all patients entering and currently on the caseload.

Referrals into the service can be made by GPs, hospitals, patients, family members, carers, care homes and social workers. A person will be assessed to make sure the service is suitable for them.

Where the patient lives will determine the best district nursing team to contact:

- Coalfields District Nursing Team call: 0191 502 5763
- East District Nursing Team call: 0191 5027424
- North District Nursing Team call: 0191 5027350
- Washington District Nursing Team call: 0191 5026999
- West District Nursing Teams call: 0191 5026426
- Sunderland Central District Nursing Team call: 0191 5025837

## The Frailty service

**What is frailty?** The term frailty refers to a person's mental and physical resilience, or their ability to bounce back and recover from events like illness and injury.

The frailty service is nursing teams working together to co-ordinate care and services for people who have been identified as needing support.

They aim to provide personalised care, support, and future care planning to promote independence, wellness, and self-care if possible. This may also help to reduce hospital admissions and to help the person stay healthier for longer.

Patients may live in their own home, sheltered accommodation, supported living or in an older persons care home.

Referrals into the service can be made by GP's, hospital services and community teams.



# Physical health



## Recovery at home

Recovery at home provide a 24 hours a day 7 days a week service. They are ready to respond quickly to provide support during times of illness. Or if someone experiences an unexpected change in their condition that could develop into a crisis. The teams respond to patients in their own homes.

You can call them 24 hours per day, 7 days per week on 0191 561 6666

## Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)

Speech and Language Therapy is important for people living with dementia. It helps address difficulties with speech, language, communication, eating, drinking, and swallowing. They work on memory, problem solving, and higher-level thinking skills to maintain independence.

Contact your GP practice for a referral into the service.

## The carers passport

This is in place across South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust hospitals to help carers support their loved ones while they are an inpatient on the wards.

It is a credit card-sized passport, worn on a lanyard. This helps staff to identify carers and enables those carers to:

- Visit outside normal hours, including overnight, with the agreement of the ward manager.
- Help the patient with eating and drinking.
- Be actively involved in the patient's care and planning for discharge.



If you are supporting a loved one who is an inpatient in hospital. This can be in Sunderland or South Tyneside, ask a member of staff on the ward if you can be considered for a carers passport.

## The Alexandra Centre

This centre is based in Sunderland Royal Hospital and is dedicated to offering care for patients with dementia and delirium while they are an inpatient in the hospital.

Patients can access therapeutic and wellbeing activities in a warm and caring, non-clinical environment.



# Physical health



## Delirium

Delirium is a disturbance of brain function where the person suffers from sudden confusion and changes in their behaviour and alertness. It is most common in people over 65 and in those with pre-existing memory difficulties such as dementia.

### What are the symptoms of delirium?

The symptoms of delirium are often worse at night. This can affect how the person sleeps. People with delirium often sleep through the day and are awake at night. Symptoms can be made worse by constipation, pain, impaired hearing or eyesight, poor nutrition and an unfamiliar environment.

A person suffering from delirium can suffer from symptoms including;

- Confusion
- Easily distracted
- Ramble some speech
- Changes in alertness
- Agitation (sometimes leading to aggression)
- Behavioural changes
- Changes in personality including paranoia
- Hallucinations.

**It is important to seek medical advice if any of these symptoms are present.**

Recovery can be anytime between a few hours and several weeks. Delirium can cause people to feel frightened, suspicious, restless and uncooperative, even with people they know well.

### What are the causes of delirium?

There are many causes of delirium, including:

- Infection – such as chest or urine infection.
- Certain medications, such as some sedatives.
- Surgery.
- Dehydration or abnormalities in the salts in the blood.
- Alcohol or drug withdrawal.
- Constipation.
- Stroke.
- Pain.
- Malnutrition.
- Change in the person's surroundings.

Often, delirium has more than one cause. In addition, certain patients are more prone to a delirium and require a less severe cause such as constipation to become confused.

### Coping as a carer

Having a relative or friend who is suffering from delirium can be a frightening experience. The person may seem distressed and frightened and sometimes they do not recognise their closest friends or relatives.

The symptoms are normally short lived but can last several weeks or sometimes months. The duration of the delirium will change depending on the severity of the underlying cause.

# Physical health



## Visiting the emergency department (A&E) at Sunderland Royal Hospital

Thanks to the work of carers of people with dementia, from Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, Essence Service and South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Sunderland Royal Hospital now has a dedicated, single occupancy waiting room for people who are living with dementia and their carers.

The room has been named 'Poppy's Place'. The room has activities and a dedicated accessible toilet nearby. Incontinence products are also available from the departments nurse's station if they are required.

If you attend the emergency department, ask at reception if you can use this quiet space.

## Age UK Sunderland's Hospital Discharge Service

This service aims to promote a good quality of life through supporting reablement, giving choice and control of independence for all older people in Sunderland.



This free service can provide up to 3 weeks support following discharge from hospital at a time convenient to you. People need different levels of support and Age UK Sunderland's team can make visits 5 days a week, between the hours of 9.00am to 5.00pm.

## How does a person qualify for the hospital discharge service?

- If the person is over 60 years old.
- Live in Sunderland.
- Are without a care plan.

## What can they assist with?

- Shopping
- Light housework
- Meal preparation
- Collect prescriptions
- Companionship
- Signposting.

Contact Age UK Sunderland for more information about this service:

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland)

# Physical health



## Sundowning

The Alzheimer's Society say, sometimes a person with dementia will behave in ways that are difficult to understand in the late afternoon or early evening. This is known as 'sundowning'.

Sometimes you might see changes in the person's behaviour in the late afternoon or towards the end of the day. During this time, the person may become intensely distressed, agitated and have hallucinations or delusions. This may continue into the night. This makes it hard for them to get enough sleep.

Sundowning can happen at any stage of dementia but is more common during the middle and later stages.

The reasons why sundowning happens are not well understood. It is possible that a range of different causes makes it more likely. These might include:

- Tiredness, hunger, pain or other unmet physical needs.
- Not enough exposure to sunlight during the day.
- Overstimulation during the day. Such as from a noisy or busy environment.
- Disturbance to the person's 'body clock' caused by damage to the brain.
- Disturbed levels of hormones that vary over the course of the day.
- Sensory impairment, such as hearing or sight loss.
- Tiredness in other people causing the person with dementia to become upset.
- Mood disorders, such as anxiety or depression.
- Fewer carers around to look after the person (in a care home).
- Side effects of prescribed drugs.

Some of these are related to the time of day. Others may happen at any time. Try to identify which of these problems might be affecting the person, as each problem may need a different treatment.

## Tips for reducing sundowning

Sometimes what seems like 'sundowning' could be the person trying to communicate a need. This could be needing the toilet, feeling hungry or being in pain.

Uneven indoor lighting and reflective surfaces can sometimes cause confusion by creating disturbing shadows or mirrors. Close the curtains or blinds once it starts to get dark and cover the television with a dust cover, if it's not being used.

Think whether something that's happened during the day has affected them. If they seem agitated, try to calm them by distracting them. Perhaps talking about a favourite memory or event they enjoy thinking about.

If they remain agitated, it could be that they have a need that is not being met. Contact the Alzheimer's Society to find out more:

Call: 0333 150 3456

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

# Mental health

## Mental health crisis support

In a time of crisis, it is so important to get the right help at the right time. Who you contact will depend on how severe the situation is.



There is no step-by-step guide to accessing crisis support. Each person and situation is unique. The severity of the impact upon the person will determine which organisation or service you contact:

- Where there is danger to life – Visit your local hospital's emergency department or call 999.
- If you urgently need specialist advice the Initial Response Service offer 24/7 support and information on freephone: 0800 652 2867.
- NHS 111 (extension 2) can discuss concerns and signpost to appropriate support.
- Has the GP been made aware of the situation? Contact the surgery and speak to someone.

### 24-hour support is available when you need to talk

#### Silverline

Free helpline available all day, every day, for people aged 55+.

**Call: 0800 470 8090**

#### The Samaritans

Whatever you're going through, a Samari24-hour will face it with you. Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**Call free on: 116 123**

### Together in a Crisis

Support people who are in a mental health crisis caused by practical situations that are impacting your life. This could be:

- Debt or financial worries caused by the cost-of-living crisis
  - Housing issues
- Relationship difficulties
- Problems with drugs or alcohol.

**Call: 0300 131 0333**

### Essence Service support workers

If the person is registered with Age UK Sunderland's dementia hub, the Essence Service, you can contact their named support worker from 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday for support on: **0191 522 1310**

**GOING THROUGH  
A STORM  
OR JUST BEEN  
THROUGH ONE?**

**ANDYSMANCLUB**  
are talking  
groups for men to  
**HELP YOU** through  
those storms.

**FIND OUT  
MORE** [info@andysmanclub.co.uk](mailto:info@andysmanclub.co.uk)  
[www.andysmanclub.co.uk](http://www.andysmanclub.co.uk)

**#ITSOKAYTALK**

**ANDYSMANCLUB  
SUNDERLAND**

**SUNDERLAND NORTH**  
Beacon of Light,  
Stadium Way,  
Monkwearmouth,  
Sunderland SR5 1SN  
EVERY MON 7PM EXC. BANK HOLS

**SUNDERLAND SOUTH**  
Kayll Road Library,  
Kayll Rd, Sunderland  
SR4 7TW  
EVERY MON 7PM EXC. BANK HOLS

ANDYSMANCLUB is a registered  
charity in England and Wales  
(1179547) and a Company Limited  
by Guarantee, registered in  
England and Wales (11118153)



## Mental health

### Sunderland Mind

Sunderland Mind provide confidential, high-quality services for individuals, carers and families experiencing emotional or mental health problems.

They aim to provide advice, information and counselling in a safe, caring and non-judgemental environment.

Call: 0191 565 7218

Email: [admin@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:admin@sunderlandmind.co.uk)

Website: [www.sunderlandmind.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandmind.co.uk)



### Washington Mind

Washington Mind work with the people who use their services to support them in achieving their goals and engaging in their communities.

Their goal is to try to help people experiencing emotional or mental distress to regain their full potential in life and work.

Call: 0191 417 8043

Email: [info@washingtonmind.org.uk](mailto:info@washingtonmind.org.uk)

Website: [www.washingtonmind.org.uk](http://www.washingtonmind.org.uk)

Just turn up at 5.45pm.....no need to book and it's free

COMMUNITY FUND

"People start to heal the moment they feel heard"

SUNDERLAND

# PeerTalk®

Doing anything is hard

Money's a worry

Sleep's a struggle

We've split up

I need to talk

I feel scared about ...

It's all too much


I've lost my job

Facing Depression Together

## Peer Support Group for those living with depression, anxiety or other distress

EVERY MONDAY 5.45pm – 7.15pm

Sunderland Counselling Service,  
51 John Street, Sunniside,  
Sunderland,  
SR1 1QN.



Find out more at:

- 07719 562 617
- [peertalk.org.uk](http://peertalk.org.uk)
- [enquiries@peertalk.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@peertalk.org.uk)
- @peer\_talk
- @peertalk1
- peertalkcharity

The PeerTalk Charitable Foundation, registered charity no.1169830.

### Community hubs

The new community hubs bring together primary, secondary and voluntary sector organisations.

Based in the heart of local communities the hubs provide a comfortable local space for patients and service users to attend appointments, access groups, courses and activities, and explore opportunities to improve their wellbeing and health.

The hubs work in partnership with their host sites, healthcare sector and the community to make sure the services available meet the needs of the local community.

The hubs are based at:

Hope4All, the Next Door Project,  
Pennywell, SR4 9BD.

Building Blocks Day Centre, Washington,  
NE37 2SS.

# Housing and your home



Top tips for making your home dementia friendly:

- 1. Make sure you've got good lighting** – Check that natural light can get into your house. Good lighting helps you see clearly and make sense of where you are. Make sure there's nothing blocking light from coming in through the window. Also make sure your bedroom is dark enough at night, as this will help you sleep better.
- 2. Make sure your flooring is safe** – Remove anything that could make you trip up. Get rid of any rugs or mats and watch out for other trip hazards like cables. Make sure you can see the flooring clearly too, plain matt flooring is best. Avoid flooring that's shiny or that's a similar colour to the walls, as it may confuse you.
- 3. Make eating and drinking easier** – Eating and drinking well is important for your health. Use plates, cups and tablecloths with colours that contrast with food. Try using clear plastic containers to store your food, so you can see what's inside.
- 4. Get furniture that you can see clearly** – Dementia may affect how well you can tell the difference between colours. Use bright and contrasting colours to help you see furniture better. Avoid stripes and strong patterns as they can be confusing.
- 5. Remind yourself where things are** – If you have memory problems you may forget where things are kept. Put pictures or signs on cupboards and drawers so you know what's inside them. Try to keep things like your keys, wallet and mobile phone in the same place.
- 6. Keep things simple in the bathroom** – Put a picture and sign on the door labelling the toilet or bathroom. Consider removing the toilet lid if it makes it easier to identify. It's also helpful to have towels and toilet rolls with colours that contrast the walls.
- 7. Keep clutter-free** – Untidiness around the home may make you feel confused and distracted. Get rid of any excess clutter and make sure cupboards and drawers are tidy. Turn off the TV or radio when you're not watching or listening to them, so the noise isn't confusing or distracting.
- 8. Cover or remove mirrors** – People with dementia may not recognise themselves at their current age. This can cause distress, so you may wish to remove or cover any unnecessary mirrors.
- 9. Use equipment to keep yourself safe** – Use grab rails to hold onto and prevent yourself from falling. Installing smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors can also help keep you safe. Sensors can help too. For example, they can detect whether the water has been left running or the temperature is too high or low.
- 10. Keep active and engaged** – Keeping up with the things you enjoy is great for your quality of life. Use a large-faced clock and a calendar to help you keep track of the day and time, and the different things you're doing. Some people find a whiteboard helpful for writing down reminders.
- 11. Get outside** – Take opportunities to get outdoors. It's good for your wellbeing. Check that the front door is easy to tell apart from the others in the road or block. If you've got a garden, make sure there's somewhere you can sit and rest when you need to.

Contact the Alzheimer's Dementia Support Line for further information.

Call: 0333 150 3456

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

# Housing and your home



## Home adaptations and help to remain at home

The home improvement agency aims to enable those needing support to maintain their independence in their chosen home for the foreseeable future.

Services include minor or major adaptations to the home, the handyman's service for smaller jobs around the home and advice on how to access funding to improve the standard of your home or keep it warm.

Call Sunderland Care and Support on 0191 561 4355

Or email: [hia@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk](mailto:hia@sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk)

To enquire about the handyman service call: 0191 5616666

## If you live in a Gentoo property

Gentoo offer support to make adaptations and repairs to housing for older and vulnerable people.

Call: 0191 525 5000

Website: [www.gentoo.org.uk](http://www.gentoo.org.uk) and search repairs

## Interactive doorbells

An interactive doorbell works by allowing people to see who is at the door when there is motion detected. Even when not home the person can see what's happening through the device's App on their phone and speak through the doorbell.

The mobile phone application (app) also has several other useful features to make a home more secure.

These are available through many trusted retailers. On the high street and online. You could ask a friend or a relative to help you find the most appropriate option.



## LIFestyle Service

**Are you in need of some help in your daily life and around the home?**

If so, Age UK Sunderland's LIFestyle service is for you. We have a fully trained team covering the whole of the city who can help with your housework, shopping, or a visit for companionship.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [lifestyle@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:lifestyle@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) and search 'Lifestyle service'

# Housing and your home



## Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue – home safety checks

If you live in Tyne and Wear, you may be eligible for a free safe and well check. A uniformed member of staff will visit your home to discuss a range of fire prevention topics.

They will then:

- Give you detailed safety advice specific to you and your home.
- Fit smoke alarms and issue protective equipment if necessary.
- Offer you the opportunity to ask any questions.

Safe and well checks normally take around 30 to 45 minutes, but this can vary depending on your circumstances.

To find out if you're eligible for a safe and well check by visiting their website and searching 'safe and well check' or giving them a call.

Call: 0191 444 1500

Website: [www.twfire.gov.uk](http://www.twfire.gov.uk)

## Locking cooker valve

A locking cooker valve can help people to retain their independence at home and provides reassurance to family, friends and carers.

The simple safety device is fitted to existing gas cooker pipework. When the valve is locked, the gas supply to the cooker is stopped. This prevents the risk of the cooker being unintentionally turned on or left on. This can give peace of mind to the carer or relative that the cooker can't be used when they leave the house or the room.

The carer or relative can easily turn the valve on using the key when the cooker is required. This enables the vulnerable person to continue to use their gas cooker safely.

This service is free regardless of your gas supplier. You don't need to change energy supplier or inform your supplier of the device. If the property is rented you will need to seek the permission of the landlord to have the work done.

Contact the Northern Gas Network Customer Care Team:

Call: 0800 040 7766

Website: [www.northerngasnetworks.co.uk](http://www.northerngasnetworks.co.uk) (Search 'locking cooker valve')

## Save energy, pay less

Age UK has written a guide called save energy, pay less. It contains information on improving energy efficiency around the home.



You can order any of these guides by giving their advice line a call. Or you can print them yourself from their website.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice'. Then scroll down to free booklets and online information).

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, The Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.



# Housing and your home



You or the person you are caring for, may start to feel as if living in their own home is getting too difficult. It may be time to look at alternatives.

## Thinking about your options

Age UK have written a guide, 'Housing Options' which gives you information whether you want to stay where you are or decide to move.



Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.

## Sheltered housing

Sheltered housing provides a comfortable, convenient and secure accommodation. Whilst enabling full independence with the support of a housing scheme officer and 24-hour emergency alarm system.

Generally, the schemes will:

- Respond to emergencies and liaise with the appropriate people.
- Check equipment and alarms system.
- Will support the organisation of social activities for residents.

Contact the Sunderland City Council's home and money team for a list of sheltered accommodation across Sunderland.

Call: 0191 520 5551

## Extra care

Extra care housing is made up of self-contained homes. They have additional support services to help residents live independently.

There are several extra care schemes across Sunderland providing apartments/bungalows for rent, for sale, or shared ownership.

Extra care schemes offer secure, self-contained accommodation designed to meet the needs of people aged 55 or over who can live safely on their own with some care and support. People who live in extra care housing have their own self-contained apartment or bungalow, their own front door and a legal right to occupy the property.

Read more by visiting [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'extra care').

Call: 0191 520 5551



# Housing and your home



## Residential and nursing care homes

Residential and nursing care homes are for people who cannot continue living in their own homes. It can be for a short time, over a longer period or permanently.

The main difference between residential and nursing care is that a nursing care home will always have a registered nurse onsite. They can manage more complex health needs compared to a residential care home.

If a person living in a residential home develops a health condition or an existing condition worsens, they may have to move to a nursing home.

People can arrange care for themselves or a loved one directly with a provider. Or the council can arrange the support and will carry out an assessment to decide the care and support needed. This will see if you meet the eligible criteria for this support.

The council can supply you with a list of Sunderland's homes and assess you.

**Call Sunderland City Council: 0191 520 5552**

**Visit: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk)** (search 'residential and nursing care').

## Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England.

They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourage care services to improve.

They monitor, inspect and regulate services and publish what they find. Where they find poor care, they will use their powers to take action.

You may want to check with the CQC how particular care homes are rated, before you make a decision on where you or a loved one lives.

**Call: 03000 616161**

**Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)**

Age UK have written a guide to finding, choosing and paying for a care home. They also have a care home check list. This contains what to consider and questions to ask when looking at care homes.



**Call: 0191 514 1131**

**Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland)** (search 'information and advice'. Then scroll down to free booklets and online information)

**For personalised support contact Age UK Sunderland's Dementia Hub, Essence Service on: 0191 522 1310.**



## Energy Suppliers Priority Register

**The Priority Services Register (PSR) provides extra help and additional support during a power cut for elderly, very ill or disabled people, or those who rely on power for medical equipment.**

**PRIORITY  
SERVICES  
REGISTER**

Joining your energy suppliers Priority Services Register means you'll be able to get a range of extra help when you need it. This could be all the time, or for a short period due to something that's happened in your life.

Some of the help you can get includes:

- Priority support in an emergency
- Wherever possible, advanced notice of scheduled power cuts
- An identification and password scheme if someone needs to visit or contact you, helping you feel confident they are genuine
- The ability to nominate someone to receive communications and bills from your supplier, for example a family member, carer or someone you trust
- The chance to move your prepayment meter if you can't safely get to it to top up
- Regular meter reading services
- Account info and bills in large print or braille
- Assistance reconnecting your gas supply, if you need it

**Register by contacting your energy supplier – you will find their details on your latest bill**

# Getting out and about



## Driving with dementia

If a person has certain medical conditions, including dementia and has a driving license, they **must** inform the Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

Informing the DVLA doesn't mean that they will lose the license. It is to make sure people are keeping themselves and others safe on the roads. Also, anyone age 70 and over must renew their license.

Visit: [www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) (search 'dementia and driving' to complete a CGI form).  
Or call: 0300 790 6806

## Blue badge scheme

This is a badge that can be displayed on the dashboard of a vehicle. It allows people to park in designated disabled parking bays. It is for those who are living with mobility restrictions where simple trips, such as visiting the doctors or local shops can prove to be a real challenge and stressful process. Having a blue badge can enable people to live more independently, enjoy greater freedom and ultimately, live the life they want.

To see the criteria and apply visit: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](https://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'blue badge scheme').

Call: 0191 520 5552

If you need support to access the blue badge scheme, Age UK's dementia hub, Essence Service can offer personalised support. Call them on 0191 522 1310.

## Northeast drive mobility

Offer information, advice and assessments for people who have a medical condition, such as dementia.

For more information visit: [www.cntw.nhs.uk](https://www.cntw.nhs.uk) and search Northeast Drive Mobility

Call: 0191 287 5090

Email: [northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk](mailto:northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk)

## Mobility care solutions limited

This service has many aids to help manage everyday activities more independently. They can also assist if vehicle adaptations are needed for independent travel. Their staff are based in Southwick Industrial Estate. They can help you find the right products and equipment to suit a person's individual needs.

Call: 0191 548 7747

Email: [enquiries@mobilitycaresolutions.com](mailto:enquiries@mobilitycaresolutions.com)

Website: [www.mobilitysunderland.co.uk](https://www.mobilitysunderland.co.uk)

# Getting out and about



## Dial a driver scheme

Age UK Sunderland provide a scheme which is available for older people 60 years old and over who find it difficult to use public transport to get to important appointments.

The scheme uses volunteer drivers who use their own cars for transport. You will be required to reimburse the fuel costs/vehicle "wear & tear" for the volunteer up to the sum of 50p per mile from the point the volunteer driver leaves their own home to their return. They will always try to get a driver who lives as close as possible to you (or your destination) to minimise costs.

The volunteer driver (all will have an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring check) will support you from the car to your appointment. They will usually be able to wait for short hospital/doctor appointments etc. When an appointment lasts longer than 45 minutes it may be necessary to book a separate return trip.

Bookings are made through Age UK Sunderland by giving them a call or sending an email. When the call can't be answered there is a voicemail facility to leave details and the call will be returned as soon as possible.

Call: 0191 514 8339

Email: [dialadriver@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:dialadriver@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'dial a driver').



## Patient transport

North East Ambulance Service provides a safe and reliable non-emergency transport service for patients who need medical or clinical support. This helps people to get to and from their appointments.

If you have a medical condition that prevents you from travelling to a treatment centre by any other means, or you require the skills of an ambulance care assistant during the journey, the Patient Transport Service can help.

If you are eligible for patient transport, your booking will be made either by your GP, hospital staff or you can call them yourself.

Call: 0191 215 1515. This line is open from Monday to Friday, 8am–6pm.

Read more by visiting [www.neas.nhs.uk](http://www.neas.nhs.uk) (search 'patient transport service').

# Getting out and about



## Wheelchair services

Sunderland's Wheelchair Assessment team provide advice and support for people who wish to buy their own wheelchair or be provided with one through the scheme funded by the NHS.

The team aims to find equipment that provides mobility, comfort, safety and most importantly, independence.

Call: 0191 520 5552

Website: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'wheelchair services').

## Wheelchair maintenance and repair

If your wheelchair is broken and has been provided by Sunderland Wheelchair Services, contact Ross Care:

Call: 0191 4155151

Or email: [www.northeast@rosscare.co.uk](mailto:www.northeast@rosscare.co.uk)

## Hiring a wheelchair

The British Red Cross provides wheelchair hire services across the UK. There is a cost for this provision.

They offer comfortable, safe, and reliable manual wheelchairs whether you're looking for self-propelled or transit wheelchairs.

Find out more information about the types of wheelchairs they offer and see how they may be able to support you to meet the financial costs too.

Call: 0300 456 1914

Website: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk) (search 'hire a wheelchair').

### Top Tip

**Many local supermarkets and shopping centres have wheelchairs available to use while you are on their premises. It could be worth giving them a call to check before you make your journey.**



# Getting out and about



## Radar accessible toilets in Sunderland

A RADAR key is a key that opens more than 10,000 disabled toilets across the UK. There are several locked accessible toilets in Sunderland. These can be accessed using a RADAR key. Please note that access will be limited to the venues opening hours.

### In Sunderland

- The Harbour View, Roker seafront, SR6 0NU
- Lower Promenade, Roker seafront, SR6 0PL
- Park Lane interchange, SR1 3PE (daytime only)
- Southwick Green, SR5 2HY
- Revolution, Low Road, SR1 3QA
- William Jameson, Fawcett Street, SR1 1RH
- Yate's bar, Burdon Road, SR1 1QB
- Gala bingo, Pallion New Road, SR4 6UA
- Stadium of Light, SR5 1SU
- South Bents, SR6 8BB.

### In Washington

- Concord Centre, bus station, Victoria Road.
- Sir William de Wessington, NE37 2SY (Wetherspoons)
- Gala Bingo, The Galleries, NE38 7SB.

### In Hetton

- Easington Lane High Street, DH5 0JN
- Town centre car park, Front Street, DH5 9LZ.



RADAR keys can be purchased from Age UK Sunderland at the Bradbury Centre.

Call: 0191514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Or at their dementia hub, the Essence Service.

Call: 0191 522 1310

Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

## Keeping track of your loved one

If a person is prone to wandering, you may want to consider using a device such as an Apple AirTag, or an android alternative and link it to an Application (app) on your mobile phone.

This is a super-easy way to keep track of the person.

Attach one to their keys or ask them to pop one in their coat pocket to keep them on your radar.



# Getting out and about



## Changing places

Changing places are toilets which are designed for people who require extra facilities that are not offered by standard accessible toilets. They are bigger with room for one or two carers. They include equipment which may be needed, such as a hoist, privacy screens and an adult-sized changing bench. Sunderland changing places are situated in:

- Barnes Park, SR4 7PE
- Beacon Of Light, SR5 1SN
- Herrington Country Park, DH4 4NF
- Hetton Community Pool and Wellness Centre, DH5 9LZ
- Houghton Sports and Wellness Centre, DH4 5AH
- Leechmere Centre, SR2 9TQ
- Marine Walk, SR6 0PR
- Monkwearmouth Hospital (Main reception), SR5 1NB
- Raich Carter, SR2 8PD
- Roker Park, SR6 9PF
- Seaburn Shelter, SR6 8AA
- Silksworth Community Pool Tennis and Wellness Centre, SR3 1PD
- Sunderland Aquatic Centre, SR6 0DB
- Sunderland Royal Hospital, SR4 7TP (ask at main reception off Kayll Road)
- The South Hylton Tansy Centre, SR4 0QD
- Washington Library and Customer Service Centre, NE38 7RZ.

For more information about Changing Places and to find more go to:  
[www.changing-places.org](http://www.changing-places.org)



**Age UK Sunderland's Trishaw  
is a way of transporting  
older people  
who enjoy the wind in  
their hair.**

Our rides are **comfortable, fun and free**. They enable older people to explore Sunderland's amazing sights close-up.

For more information about Age UK Sunderland's Trishaw rides contact Age UK Sunderland at: [frontdooradmin@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:frontdooradmin@ageuksunderland.org.uk) or call our Community Club Coordinator on: 0191 514 8338

# Getting out and about

## 'Wandering' (can be known as 'walking with a purpose')

Walking is good exercise and can help relieve stress and boredom. However, a person with dementia may walk repeatedly around at home or leave the house during the day or night.

When a person with dementia walks about, it is often referred to as 'dementia wandering'.

Walking may become a problem, especially if the person has difficulties with memory or can't find their way home. A change in walking habits can also be a sign that a person has a need that is not being met.

It can be difficult to understand why the person you are caring for is walking about. By exploring the reasons, you can support them with their needs and help them to remain independent and safe.

The reasons why a person with dementia might want to walk about may not be obvious. If you ask the person, they may not remember the reason or they may not be able to tell you.

As the person's carer, friend or relative, you are likely to know them best. Trust your instincts and try to use your knowledge of the person to understand why they are walking. This may help you find ways to support them.

If you are worried or have any questions about wandering contact the Alzheimer's Society:

**Call their dementia support line: 0333 150 3456**

**Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)** (search 'wandering').



## The Herbert Protocol for if a person goes missing

If you care for someone with dementia, you can fill out a Herbert Protocol form which includes details about the person, their past, their habits and places they go.

Keep the form in a safe place, then if the person goes missing you can call 999, tell the police operator that they have a Herbert Protocol and give the completed form to the police. This saves time at the start of a search.

**Find out more and access the form by visiting:**

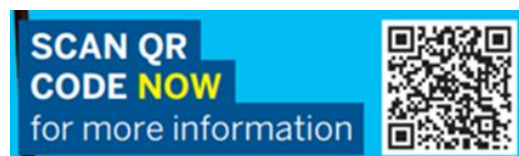
**[www.northumbria.police.uk](http://www.northumbria.police.uk)** (search 'vulnerable people at risk of going missing').

Local dementia support service, Age UK Sunderland's Essence Service can supply you with a form to complete yourself or can offer support to complete it if necessary.

**Call: 0191 522 1310**

## Safe and Found online

You can now fill in a Herbert Protocol form online. This gives police quicker access to the information.



# Getting out and about

## The importance of appropriate footwear

People experiencing dementia often face several footwear-related challenges due to their cognitive and physical limitations.

These challenges may include:

1. Difficulty with laces
2. Increased risk of falls
3. Sensory changes.

The importance of comfort, safety, and ease of use cannot be overstated for shoes for dementia patients. Here are some things to consider:

**Comfort** – Dementia patients spend significant time on their feet, so choosing shoes that provide cushioning, adequate arch support, and a comfortable fit is crucial. This can help minimize discomfort and foot pain.

**Safety** – Shoes with non-slip soles and good traction are essential to reduce the risk of slips, trips, and falls. Look for footwear with slip-resistant features that provide stability and grip on various surfaces.

**Ease of use** – Opt for shoes with easy closure systems, such as velcro straps or hook-and-loop closures. These alternatives to traditional laces make it easier for dementia patients to put on and remove their shoes independently.

**Proper fit** – Shoes should fit well to prevent blisters, pressure sores, or rubbing against the feet. Ensure the shoes are neither too tight nor too loose, as either can cause discomfort and foot problems.

By prioritizing comfort, safety, and ease of use in shoes for dementia patients, you can enhance mobility, reduce the risk of falls, and promote overall well-being.

Information about Sunderland's Falls Service can be found in the Physical Health section of this booklet.

## Buy easy dress clothing and shoes

The Alzheimer's Society work with suppliers to offer a wide range of easy dress clothing and footwear for men and women, including shirts, blouses, trousers, skirts, underwear and nightwear and trainers.

Call: 0333 366 0035

Website: [www.shop.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.shop.alzheimers.org.uk) (search 'clothing and footwear').



### Top tip from a local carer

**Slippers designed for diabetics are particularly useful, as they have velcro fastenings to both the top and the heel, which make them a secure fit and easy to put on and remove.**



# Wellbeing and activities

It is important for our wellbeing that we remain active and engaged with our communities. Exercise, outdoor activities, games, music, and art are just a few of the activities proven to be helpful for those with dementia or other memory difficulties.



## Essence Service - Sunderland's Dementia Hub

Helping to keep the Essence of an individual after a dementia diagnosis



**All activities are FREE for people registered with the Essence Service**  
**To take part in any activity call the Essence Team on: 0191 522 1310**  
**Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)**

### Essence Clients and Carer Combined Activities

Activity	Time	Venue
Monday		
Crafty Club Arts & Crafts Activity	10:00 – 12:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Living Well with Dementia Dementia Awareness Sessions	13:00 - 17:00 or 14:00 - 16:00	
The Avenue Group	14:00 – 15:30	The Avenue, 26 Zetland Square, Roker, Sunderland, SR6 0EQ
Tuesday		
Essence Men's Group	10:00 – 12:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Ladies Carer's Corner	10:00 - 12:00	
The Holiday Inn Group	14:00 – 15:30	The Holiday Inn, Keel Square, Sunderland, SR1 3DS
Tuesday Singers	14:15 – 15:45	Essence Centre, Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park, Sunderland SR3 2ND
Wednesday		
Lovely Ladies Group	14:00 – 16:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Gentlemen Carer's Group	14:00 – 16:00	
The Biddick Group	14:00 - 15:30	Biddick Arts Centre, Biddick Lane, Washington NE38 8AB
Thursday		
Coffee Morning / Meet & Greet	10:00 – 12:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Strength, Mobility & Falls Prevention	13:30 – 14:30	
Indoor Curling	14:45 – 16:30	
Friday		
Music & Memories	10:00 – 12:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Friday Lunch Club	12:00 – 13:30	
The Kepier Hall Group	14:00 – 15:30	Kepier Hall, Church Street, Houghton Le Spring DH4 4DN



# Wellbeing and activities



## Age UK Sunderland

A local independent charity run by and for the people of Sunderland. They support older people throughout the city through the provision of quality services and by campaigning on issues that affect them.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland)



## Memory Café – Whitburn Library

Sponsored by Seaburn Rotary Club this is a drop-in for people living with dementia, their families, friends and carers.

These sessions give an opportunity to relax with tea, coffee, cakes and activities, at a cost of £3.00.

Sessions take place monthly, on the third Friday of each month from 2.00pm – 4.00pm. For more information contact Whitburn Library.

Call: 0191 529 3098

## Action on Dementia

Action on Dementia offer a Tuesday Friendship Group / Lunch Club from 10.00am – 1.00pm at the Chesters, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR4 7DR.

They also offer a support group at Woodridge Gardens, Oxclose Road, Washington, NE38 7NZ on the third Friday of every month, between 10.00am to 12.00 noon.

Contact Sheelagh Dilworth if you'd like to attend.

Call: 07740 111182

Email: [actionondementiasunderland@gmail.com](mailto:actionondementiasunderland@gmail.com)

Website: [www.sunderlandactionondementia.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandactionondementia.co.uk)



## Links for life

**Links for Life**  
Sunderland

**Making life-changing  
connections in your community**

Linking people to activities, groups and services that  
make a lasting difference to their health and wellbeing.

[www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk](http://www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk)



# Wellbeing and activities



## Empire Theatre

The Empire Theatre in Sunderland offers relaxed performances. These are specially designed theatre shows that create a comfortable environment for people who need them. These performances make theatre more inclusive and accessible.

Call: 0191 566 1057

Website: [www.atgtickets.com](http://www.atgtickets.com) (search 'Sunderland Empire relaxed performances').

## Golf in Society

Golf in society help people living with chronic conditions, including dementia enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of playing golf and socialising. They run weekly golf sessions for 2 hours where carers can be confident to leave their loved ones and have some time to themselves. Their current venues are Wearside Golf Club in Coxgreen which is in Washington, Sunderland and Cocken Lodge in Houghton-le-Spring.

No previous golf experience is required, first taster session is free!

Please contact Anthony Etchells if you'd like more information or book a taster session.

Call: 07984374441

Email: [anthonye.golfinsociety@gmail.com](mailto:anthonye.golfinsociety@gmail.com)

Website: [www.golfinsociety.com](http://www.golfinsociety.com)



## Mission 2 Mobility

Ran by Active Families North East and delivered by highly trained and experienced exercise specialists, their 14-week programme helps with balance, boosts confidence and improves strength and mobility.

This benefits many older adults with strength, balance, and mobility issues. It is also suitable for those who have suffered physical or neurological injuries or have ongoing health issues that would benefit from a structured exercise programme. Before starting the course, all participants are checked to ensure their suitability for the programme.

The classes are fun and engaging and always sociable with refreshments and a chance to chat to others. It is their mission to keep people mobile and help them age well.

Call: 0191 516 6083

Email: [info@activefamiliesne.co.uk](mailto:info@activefamiliesne.co.uk)

Website: [www.activefamiliesne.co.uk](http://www.activefamiliesne.co.uk) and search 'Mission 2 Mobility'

### Top tip

**In Sunderland there are community centres around the city, who host a variety of different activities which can support our general health and wellbeing, as well as getting us out and about and meeting new people.**

**Why not pop into your local centre and ask what they have available.**



# FREE EXERCISE CLASSES

## to improve your strength, balance and confidence!

**Come and join our Strength and Balance programme for people who have had a fall, have a fear of falling or have problems with balance. Exercises will help to improve strength, balance and mobility.**

Strength and Balance is a 14 week course with start dates throughout the year which is being held at various locations across Sunderland.

### Is the class right for me?

In order to take part in the classes you should:

- Be in control of any long-term health conditions you may have
- Be able to either mobilise independently with a stick, 3 or 4 wheel rollator

- Be able to carry out standing exercises for a minimum of 5 minutes

### To join a class please call:

- North area: 0191 563 4749
- East area: 0191 516 6083
- West area: 0191 516 6083
- Washington area: 0191 537 3231
- Coalfields area: 0191 584 3840



# Wellbeing and activities

## Washington Riding Centre

Washington Riding Centre are supported by a group of passionate volunteers and a team of qualified staff.

The centre is a purpose-built equestrian centre where riders of all abilities have the opportunity to be involved in riding, equine education and volunteering. In addition, they have an accessible sensory garden which is a therapeutic space that is relaxing, helping to reduce stress and improves mental health.

The centre organise sessions called 'Tea with Timmy' where groups get to meet Timmy the pony, groom him and have refreshments all in the tranquil setting of our Sensory Garden.

Call: 0191 416 2745

Email: [wrcepro@gmail.com](mailto:wrcepro@gmail.com)

Website: [www.washingtonridingcentre.co.uk](http://www.washingtonridingcentre.co.uk)

**OVER 50? LIKE GOOD MUSIC?**  
**IF SO, XBOOM IS FOR YOU**

**60s 70s 80 MUSIC**  
**XBOOM**  
**LET'S PARTY**

Every Tuesday commencing 8th April 1pm till 4pm

**COME ALONG TO THE EMPORIUM'S DAYTIME DISCO**  
**WHERE YOU CAN ROLL BACK THE YEARS, DANCE & SING ALONG!**

Our DJ brings you the best tunes from the 60's, 70's and 80's in Sunderland

*The Emporium*

at The Emporium  
20 Vine Place  
Sunderland  
SR1 3NE

**MORE INFO:**  
TEL: 0191 565 9045  
EMAIL: [FRONTDOORADMIN@AGEUKSUNDERLAND.ORG.UK](mailto:FRONTDOORADMIN@AGEUKSUNDERLAND.ORG.UK)

# When you are raising your grandchildren



Some people who are bringing up their grandchildren can be experiencing memory difficulties or get a diagnosis of dementia. Here is some of the support available.

## More than Grandparents

Raising someone else's child is a huge responsibility particularly if the child you are caring for has emotional difficulties as a result of early years trauma. For a grandparent parenting a second time around it can be exhausting and isolating and at times extremely stressful and a daunting experience.

More than Grandparents hold regular peer support meetings where you can have a cuppa and a chat to people who have had similar experiences. They arrange regular social events and opportunities for respite and relaxation to reduce feelings of isolation and to encourage positivity and mental and physical well-being.

**Call:** 0191 5140554

**Email:** [morethangrandparents@gmail.com](mailto:morethangrandparents@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.morethangrandparents.com](http://www.morethangrandparents.com)

## Together for children

Together for children provide a range of services, information and support for parents and carers in Sunderland, helping improve the lives of children, young people and families.

If you are looking after a child or children and need some information, support or advice, contact them.

**Call:** Early Help Advice and Allocations team on 0191 561 4084

**Email:** [EHAAT@togetherforchildren.org.uk](mailto:EHAAT@togetherforchildren.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.togetherforchildren.org.uk](http://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk)

## If you are worried about a child

If you have a safeguarding concern about a child or young person, please contact Children's Safeguarding Partnership.

**Call:** 0191 561 7007 Please note, this number should only be used during the following hours: Monday to Thursday, 8.30am to 5.15pm and Friday, 8.30am to 4.45pm.

**Call:** 0191 520 5560 If you are ringing out of hours, evenings and weekends, please contact the Emergency Duty Team.

**Website:** [www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com](http://www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com)



# Eating and drinking



## Eating

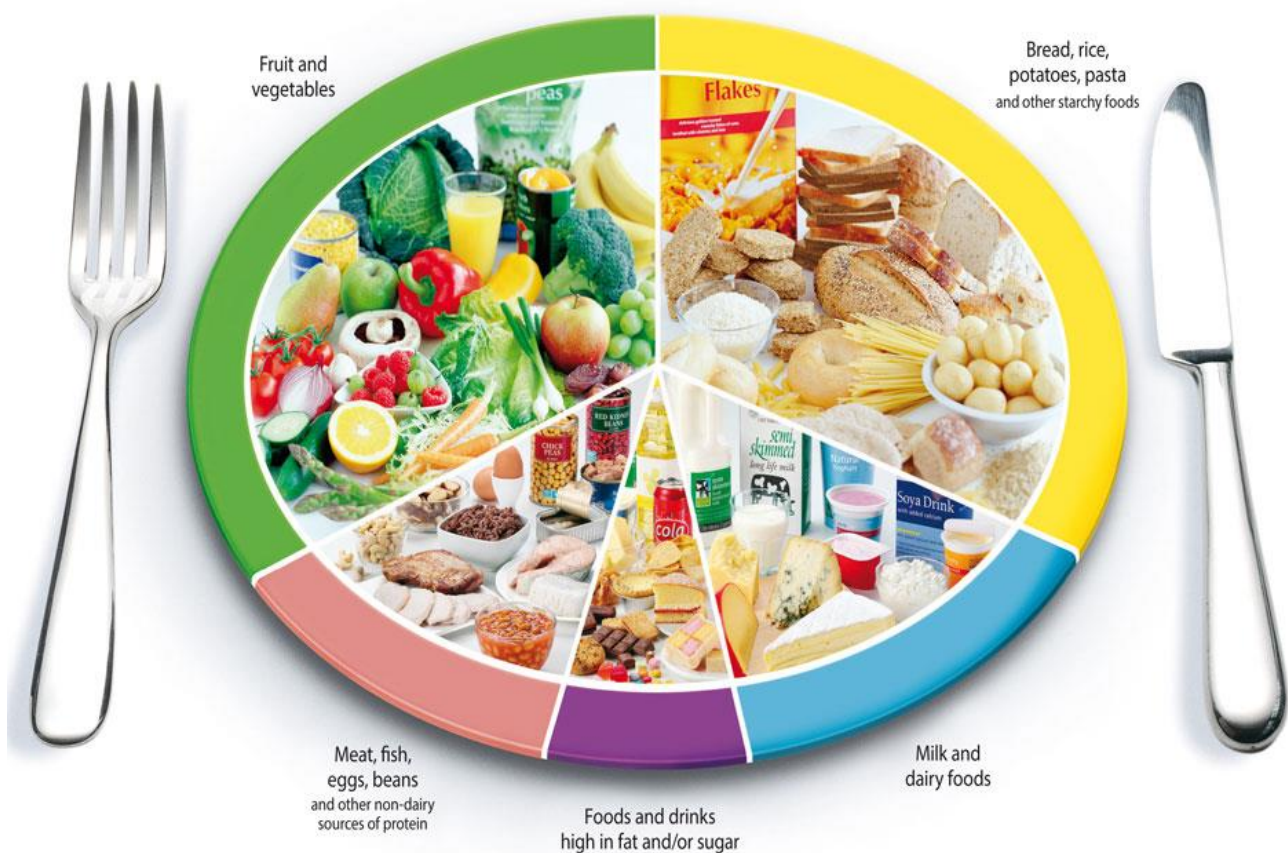
Many people living with dementia experience difficulties with their sight and their perception. This may cause them to misinterpret their surroundings.

Switching from a white plate to a plain coloured plate, such as blue or red can help people with dementia improve their eating, and as a result, their nutritional intake.

## The Eatwell Guide

The Eatwell Guide shows how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.

You do not need to achieve this balance with every meal but try to get the balance right over a day or even a week.



## Essence Service lunch club

Meet new people and enjoy a hot 2 course meal every Friday from 12.00pm – 1.30pm. There is a cost for this service.

Contact the Essence Service for more details and to book your place.

Call: 0191 522 1310

Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)



# Eating and drinking



## Community Café's

Some of Sunderland's extra care facilities have community cafes on site, which offer a selection of hot and cold meals.

Read more: [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) (search 'extra care').

Or call Sunderland City Council: 0191 520 5551

## Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)

Speech and Language Therapy is important for people living with dementia. It helps address difficulties with speech, language, communication, eating, drinking, and swallowing. Speech and Language Therapists work on memory, problem solving, and higher-level thinking skills to maintain independence.

Speak to your GP about referring you to this service.

## Meal deliveries

- **Aunt Mauds** – Provide a hot meal delivery to anyone throughout the Sunderland area. All freshly cooked British classics made from scratch.

Call: 0191 521 2573 or 079 749 11927

Email: [stantheman39@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:stantheman39@hotmail.co.uk)

Website: [www.auntmaudsmealsonwheels.co.uk](http://www.auntmaudsmealsonwheels.co.uk)

- **Wiltshire Farm Foods** – Prepared food delivery service. Contact to request a brochure or browse their website:.

Call: 01388 765500

Website: [www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com](http://www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com)

- **Meals on Wheels UK** – A research team based at the University of Bristol have developed this free to use website, where you can:
  - Search a database for details of meals on wheels providers who deliver to their address.
  - Find out more about the benefits of meals on wheels.
  - Discover a wealth of information and resources relating to meals on wheels.

Website: [www.mealsonwheelsuk.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsuk.org)

# Eating and drinking



## Drinking

People with dementia may not always recognise when they are thirsty or be able to express their thirst. This may mean that they do not drink enough. They may become dehydrated. This may increase the risk of Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs, commonly known as water infections).

### Hits and tips for good hydration

- Allow the person time to drink without rushing.
- Sit and have a drink with them.
- Ensure the person is sitting upright and comfortably.
- If carers are coming in, ask them to offer drinks at the start and end of visits.
- Offer a drink whenever anyone visits – drinking is a sociable activity.
- Attending a memory café, day centre or lunch club may encourage the person to drink. They may imitate what other people are doing, and be more willing to take direction from a staff member or volunteer.
- Consider if there are any underlying problems, such as pain, depression or an infection – if in doubt, contact their GP.
- If the person has difficulty swallowing, ask their GP for a referral to a dietician.

### What to offer

Try a range of different drinks. This could be water, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, milk, fruit juice and squash. Try drinks at different temperatures to see if they would prefer a cold or warm drink. Try offering stronger or sweeter flavours, like a less diluted squash.

Fluid intake can come from food, too, such as jelly, ice cream, ice lollies, sorbet, soup, yoghurt, custard, watermelon, pineapple, cucumber, pears, and even jacket potatoes.

Offer the person their favourite mug, glass or beaker. Different sizes and shapes of cup may help, to see if they have a preference. You may want to try a clear glass so they can see what's inside, or colourful cups to attract their attention.

Always try to offer help if the person is struggling to pick up or drink from a cup. Always ensure they always have a drink within reach. Check that their cup or glass isn't too heavy or a difficult shape to grasp and describe the drink you are offering.

Keep the cup topped up so they can see it's full and it's easy to drink from. If you're measuring fluid intake, pour drinks from a jug so you can monitor how much the person has drunk.

### Boost hydration with Jelly Drops

Jelly drops are sugar free water sweets made of 95% water. Designed to support health and hydration for people living with dementia and others that may struggle with hydration. Available in 6 juicy flavours.

Call: 0808 164 8977

Website: [www.jellydrops.com](http://www.jellydrops.com)

# Eating and drinking



## Alcohol – What to do if a person with dementia drinks too much alcohol

Dementia UK say, while drinking in moderation can be an enjoyable part of life, it may have a negative impact on a person with dementia. For example, by increasing confusion, disorientation and the risk of falls.

Dementia may cause some people to drink too much alcohol. This could be because:

- They have a form of dementia that affects their impulse control, like frontotemporal dementia.
- They forget how much alcohol they have drunk.
- They forget when they last drank alcohol.
- They have changes in taste that make alcohol more appealing.

If the person with dementia seems to be consuming alcohol excessively, you may want to avoid having alcohol in the home and provide low or zero alcohol alternatives instead.

A healthcare professional can advise you on whether the person should reduce their alcohol intake. They can also help devise a plan for cutting back or stopping drinking.

Bear in mind that alcohol may interfere with some forms of medication that the person with dementia may be taking. This may stop the medication working well and increase the risk of side effects. A GP or pharmacist can advise you about whether it is safe to drink alcohol when taking a medication.

## Wear Recovery

Based in Sunderland, Wear Recovery can offer support if a person wants to make positive changes to their alcohol use. Working across Sunderland offering one-to-one, group, and peer support. They will support people with any questions or concerns you might have about alcohol, your mental health, and more.

If you are concerned about how much a person is drinking, contact them:

Call: 0800 234 6798

Email: [SunderlandSMS.info@cgl.org.uk](mailto:SunderlandSMS.info@cgl.org.uk)

Website: [www.changegrowlive.org](http://www.changegrowlive.org)

## Day care

There are places to choose from across Sunderland when it comes to day care for people experiencing dementia. Some of them are highlighted on this page.

Some of the residential care homes in Sunderland now offer day care.

You can get a list of local homes by calling Sunderland City Council on: 0191 520 5552

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) website has information and ratings for local care homes.

Website: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

### Age UK Sunderland

Age UK Sunderland have two day care options:



- The Redwood Centre, based in Sunderland city centre. This service is available to anyone who requires support to maintain independence.
- The Metcalf Centre, situated in Houghton-le-Spring. This is a bespoke service for individuals with moderate dementia.

Both offer day care from Monday – Friday 10.00am – 3.00pm and are available for those over the age of 50 years old, who live within the City of Sunderland. Places are accessed following an initial assessment and are subject to service capacity. These services are chargeable, but you may be able to get support with the cost.

Should you wish to access either day care service, please contact Age UK Sunderland. Their Day Services Coordinator will be delighted to answer your questions either by telephone, email or a home visit. Referrals are also accepted from Health, Housing and Adult Services.

Call: 0191 5141131 or 0191 5269274

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuksunderland.org.uk](http://www.ageuksunderland.org.uk)

### Care homes offering day care and respite



Healthwatch Sunderland have a useful document providing information on Sunderland based care homes which offer day care and respite provision.

Call: 0191 514 7145

Email: [healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net)

Website: [www.healthwatchsunderland.com](http://www.healthwatchsunderland.com) (go to general advice)



### North East Dementia Care Day Care Service

We are a registered charity providing day care to  
your loved one with Dementia

We provide:

- Personal care
- Specialist activities
- Hot lunch and refreshments
- Transport



**Call us to find out more!**

**0758 538 1336**

**or visit: [northeastdementiacare.co.uk](http://northeastdementiacare.co.uk)**



### Barley Mow Park Social Re-Treat – Day Opportunities

Providing 'Day Opportunities' at Barley Mow Park Social Retreat for individuals who are aged 50+. They support individuals with physical, mobility, and mental health challenges, including dementia.

They provide person-centred exercise programs to help improve mobility and reduce dependence on carers. This includes Dementia Activities and Falls Prevention.

The programme of activities begins at 09:30am and runs throughout the day until 15.30pm. Activities are delivered to small groups of up to 10 people to ensure everyone feels they can be heard and receive the support they need to participate.

There is a bus service that can pick up and drop off members to and from their social retreat subject to availability. Equally, next of kin can bring their family member or friend in should they wish.

Payment is made either directly or through the local authority (depending on circumstances).

If these Day Opportunities is something you would be interested in and you would like a taster get in touch.



Call: 07572 502180

Email: [info@bactivenbfit.co.uk](mailto:info@bactivenbfit.co.uk)

Website: [www.bactivenbfit.co.uk](http://www.bactivenbfit.co.uk)

# Support for carers, family and friends



It is really important for carers to look after themselves as well as the person they are caring for, and that they seek support when they need to. This section includes some of the support available to carers.

Age UK have written a guide which is full of practical and emotional help for carers who are looking after someone at home.



You can order this and other helpful guides and factsheets by calling their advice line or printing them from their website.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information).

## The Essence Service

The Essence Service recognises the vital role of carers and the impact caring for someone with dementia can have. They support carers throughout the dementia journey and when their loved ones' dementia progresses. Their staff continue to provide carers with bespoke person-centered support, social prescribing and peer support groups (please see below).

Peer support groups are an opportunity for carers to join other carers and talk about their experiences in a relaxed, confidential environment. This can reduce feelings of guilt, loneliness and isolation and can enable them to access information and support during and, after your caring role ceases.

 <b>Essence Service - Sunderland's Dementia Hub</b> Helping to keep the Essence of an individual after a dementia diagnosis		
		
<b>All activities are FREE for Carers registered with the Essence Service</b> <b>To take part in any activity call the Essence Team on: 0191 522 1310</b> <b>Email: <a href="mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk">essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk</a></b>		
Carers Activities & Peer Support Groups		
Activity	Day & Time	Venue
Bereavement – Peer Support Group	Monday 14:00 – 15:30	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Ladies Carer's Corner	Tuesday 10:00 – 12:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Carers Peer Support Group	Tuesday 14:00 - 16:00	The Millennium Centre The Oval, Concord, Washington NE37 2QD
Gentlemen Carer's Group	Wednesday 14:00 – 16:00	Essence Centre Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park Sunderland SR3 2ND
Carers Peer Support Group	Thursday 14:00 - 16:00	The Avenue 26 Zetland Square, Roker, Sunderland SR6 0EQ

# About Us

At Sunderland Carers Centre we provide support to children, young people and adults who look after others and are by our definition, 'a Carer'. Many people do not see themselves as carers. They are parents, grandparents, husbands, wives, children, partners, relatives or friends, just doing what needs to be done for the person they care for.

**However, if you support a family member or friend to maintain their health, wellbeing and quality of life, then you are a carer.**

We offer a **Dementia Advice Service** that can provide information, advice and guidance to any family member or friend of someone with dementia, awaiting a dementia diagnosis or worried about someone's memory. We will provide support throughout a person's dementia journey. The Carers Centre is a dementia friendly building and staff have a range of specialist knowledge.

## Support can include:

- General Dementia condition information and how to obtain a diagnosis.
- A guide to caring for someone with Dementia.
- Carrying out Carers Assessments on behalf of Sunderland City Council. A Carers Assessment will look at how caring affects your life and consider how your own well-being can be supported now and in the future.
- One to one support and a listening ear.
- General information, advice and guidance.
- Signpost to other agencies who might be able to help you.
- Representation and support at meetings with other services.
- Peer support (groups) and social activities.
- On-going support with no time limit that is individual to you and your family.
- Targeted Young Carers support which can include; 1-1 listening support, peer support, advocacy and family support and help with education, employment, training and transition.

Check us out on our website  
[www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk)  
 and Facebook  
 @SunderlandCarersCentre



# Support for carers, family and friends



## Carers' breaks and respite care

If you need to take a break from caring, Sunderland City Council may have a duty to arrange services for the person you care for. This is known as respite care. These services are means-tested so the person you care for could have to contribute towards the cost.

Sunderland City Council can give you information about local support.

Call: 0191 520 5552

Website: [www.sunderland.gov.uk/adult-social-care](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/adult-social-care)

## Healing Opportunities Sunderland (HOPS)

HOPS support unpaid carers, those with long-term health conditions, and anyone in need. Their therapies benefit mind and body, easing pain and stress and lifting self-worth. Classes and activities bring communities together to support wellbeing.

Monthly carers' time out days provide a much-needed break for unpaid carers, offering varied group activities, therapy treatments and a tasty lunch, with plenty of time to chat and make new friends.

Call: 0191 548 3722

Email: [info@healing-sunderland.org.uk](mailto:info@healing-sunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.healing-sunderland.org.uk](http://www.healing-sunderland.org.uk)



**Sunderland's Dementia Hub**  
**Essence Lifestyle**

Essence Lifestyle supports Essence carers, caring for someone with a mild to moderate diagnosis of dementia

Essence Lifestyle offers the following practical support, to benefit the carer:

- Light housework
- Shopping support
- Preparing meals
- Companionship for the carer
- Collecting prescriptions

Essence carers are allocated 12 free Lifestyle hours in total

If you would like further information, please contact the Essence Service on: **0191 522 1310**  
Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)  
Website: [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)





Your free, all-in-one support app for people caring for loved ones.

Connect with others who understand, access expert advice, and join supportive session

[www.mobiliseonline.co.uk](http://www.mobiliseonline.co.uk)



Carers UK runs Employers for Carers, providing practical advice and recourses to help employers support carers in their workforce.

You could talk to your employer about joining Employers for Carers.

Find out more at:

[www.employersforcarers.org](http://www.employersforcarers.org)



## Sunderland Talking Therapies – carers therapy

Accessing carer's therapy will help you to focus on you and think about what you want. The therapist will work with you to think about your situation, consider your options and find ways to cope. In therapy, you will be able to explore your feelings, including your relationship with the person you care for. This is likely to help you find your own solutions and make decisions about your life.

You can self-refer for this service:

Call: 0191 566 5454

Website: [www.sunderlandtalkingtherapies.co.uk/referrals](http://www.sunderlandtalkingtherapies.co.uk/referrals)

## Dementia Friends

An Alzheimer's Society dementia friend is somebody that learns about dementia so they can help their family and the wider community.

Dementia Friends help people living with dementia by taking actions – both big and small.

These actions don't have to be time-consuming. From visiting someone you know with dementia to being more patient in a shop queue, every action counts!

It is really easy to become a Dementia Friend as their volunteer ambassadors run in-person information sessions as well as virtual information sessions that you can book on to attend. Or you can watch a short online video to join.

Call: 0330 333 0804

Website: [www.dementiafriends.org.uk](http://www.dementiafriends.org.uk)



## Essence Service dementia awareness training

Dementia awareness training is an essential activity freely available to people affected by dementia, their carers and professionals who support them.

The training is designed to enhance knowledge and understanding of dementia, its causes and effects, and encourages a positive mind-set to help all people impacted to live well. The focus is to 'See Me'. 'Know Me'. 'Understand Me'. 'See the whole person not just the dementia.'

Contact for more details and to book your place:

Call: 0191 522 1310

Email: [essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)





# End of life



## Making arrangements for end of life

You can never fully prepare for your own death. No one knows the emotions, feelings, and thoughts that will come up at the time of our death until we're in that position ourselves.

But there are things we can do to help ourselves, and our loved ones, when we're in that position. This will make sure last wishes are met and the process runs smoothly.

## Considering where to live at the end of your life

You may have strong ideas about where you'd like to live and be cared for at the end of your life, and where you would choose to die. This often involves balancing the pros and cons of different options, so it can be helpful to think about these in advance and make sure you speak to someone you trust about your wishes.

## Planning for end of life if you live in a care home

Some care homes contact a local funeral director after a resident passes away. It is important that you share your wishes for end of life with your care home, if you have a preference as to which funeral director is used.

Make sure you share this information with the home when you first become a resident in the home or make sure you tell a person close to you, so they can share this information with the home on your behalf.

## Marie Curie

Marie Curie is the UK's leading end of life charity. They care when there is no cure. They'll ease your pain, protect your dignity and support the people you love – putting you first.

Marie Curie's support Line, call them free on: 0800 090 2309

Email: [support@mariecurie.org.uk](mailto:support@mariecurie.org.uk)

Their website has a host of information which you may find useful:  
[www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)

# End of life



## Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR)

DNACPR means if your heart or breathing stops your healthcare team will not try to restart it.

A DNACPR decision is made by you and/or your doctor or healthcare team while you have capacity to make this decision.

A DNACPR decision is usually recorded on a special form, which is easily recognised by doctors, nurses and healthcare workers, so they know what to do in an emergency.

This form is kept in your medical records. It may also be printed and kept with you if you are at home or in a care home.

You and the people important to you should know that a DNACPR form has been put in your medical records.

The form says that if your heart or breathing stops, CPR should not be tried. This means medical staff will not try to restart your heart or breathing.

**More information, speak to one of your Healthcare professionals or visit: [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) (search 'DNACPR').**

## Who will look after my pets?

The wellbeing of your pets after you die is an important aspect of planning for end of life.

The person will need to decide who will be the best and most appropriate person to care for their beloved pet after their death. It is important that they speak to the person about their decision to ensure they are both able and willing to care for a pet.

The person may be able to provide some kind of financial provision for their pet's future care. This also should be discussed and agreed with the person they choose to look after their pet when they are no longer able to do so.

## Cinnamon Trust

Provide hands-on assistance to pet owners across the country when any aspect of the day-to-day care of their pets poses a problem. They also provide lifelong care for pets who outlive their owners.

**Call: 01736 757 900**

**Website: [www.cinnamon.org.uk](http://www.cinnamon.org.uk)**

# Bereavement



## Bereavement Support



Please contact us if you would like to attend our bereavement peer support

**Age UK Sunderland**  
**Bereavement - Peer Support Group**  
**Weekly on a Monday 2pm – 3.30pm**  
**Essence Service Centre**  
**Mill Hill Road, Doxford Park, Sunderland SR3 2ND**  
**Telephone: 0191 514 1131**  
**Email: [wellbeingsservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:wellbeingsservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)**



## Everlasting memories, grief and loss support group

Talking to other people can help you work through the bereavement and, gradually, through time, move on. Our Bereavement and Loss Support Group at Sunderland Mind helps you do just that, providing you with a safe environment to talk about your experiences. The group is based on caring for each other, trust, and confidentiality to allow for the support you need.

Wednesdays 10am – 3pm  
Contact Sunderland Mind for more information and to book your place.

Call: 0191 565 7218  
Email: [groups@sunderlandmind.co.uk](mailto:groups@sunderlandmind.co.uk)  
Website: [www.sunderlandmind.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandmind.co.uk)  
(search 'Loss Support').

## Sunderland Counselling Service

Based in John Street in Sunderland city centre, their bereavement support group runs weekly for six weeks, with no more than ten attendees, so the group is small.

When the group starts, everyone is new to the group, and so everyone is in the same boat. It is also a closed group, so nobody new joins after they have started.

Call: 0191 514 7007

Email: [office@sunderlandcounselling.org.uk](mailto:office@sunderlandcounselling.org.uk)

Website: [www.sunderlandcounselling.org.uk](http://www.sunderlandcounselling.org.uk) (search 'bereavement support group').

The death of someone close to you can be one of the hardest things we ever go through.

Age UK have the following guides and factsheets to support you:



- Coping with the death of a loved one.
- When someone dies.
- How to be an executor.
- Your mind matters.

You can order any of these guides or factsheets by giving their advice line a call or you can print them off yourself from their website.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email: [enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland) (search 'information and advice' and scroll down to free booklets and online information)

# Bereavement

## Bereavement Advice Centre

Offers practical help when someone dies.

There are many practical matters to attend to when someone dies. Bereavement Advice Centre supports and advises people on what they need to do after a death, such as:

- What to do when someone dies
- Registering a death
- Probate and legal matters

and much, much more.

Call: 0800 634 9494

Website: [www.bereavementadvice.org](http://www.bereavementadvice.org)

## Tell Us Once

Tell Us Once is a service that lets you report a death to most government organisations in one go.

This service allows you to inform central and local government services of the death at one time rather than having to write, telephone or even attend each service individually.

The Tell Us Once service is free to use and can save you a great deal of time and effort.

Call: 0800 085 7308

Website: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) (search 'Tell Us Once').

# Useful phone numbers and links

As well as local services, there are also organisations across the country who offer support, information and guidance to people with dementia and their friends and family.

## Admiral Nurse Helpline and virtual clinic

Provided by Dementia UK, the Admiral Nurse Dementia Helpline provides information, advice and support with any aspect of dementia.

Call: 0800 888 6678

Email: [helpline@dementiauk.org](mailto:helpline@dementiauk.org)

Website: [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

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## Age UK Sunderland

Age UK Sunderland aims to promote the well-being of all older people throughout the City of Sunderland, improve their quality of life and help them maintain independence.

Call: 0191 514 1131

Email:

[enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

Website: [www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/sunderland)

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## Alzheimer's Society

Information and advice for people with dementia and their carers.

They also offer companion calls, which are a series of regular, friendly telephone calls, typically scheduled weekly.

They also offer an online support forum, covering a wide range of subjects.

Call: 0333 150 3456

Website: [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

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## Carers Direct

Carers support and information online. Advice on respite breaks, carers allowance, carers' assessments, community care assessments and practical support.

Call: 0300 123 1053

Email: [carersdirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk](mailto:carersdirect@nhschoices.nhs.uk)

Website: [www.nhs.uk/carersdirect](http://www.nhs.uk/carersdirect)

## Carers UK

Carers UK provides information on your rights and how to get help.

Call: : 0808 808 777E

Email: [advice@carersuk.org](mailto:advice@carersuk.org)

Website: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org)

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## Chatterbox Action Against Loneliness Programme

A free telephone befriending service supporting lonely and isolated caregivers, former carers, the bereaved and people with a life-limiting illness or who are near end of life.

Call: 01743 245088

Email: [chatterbox@omega.uk.net](mailto:chatterbox@omega.uk.net)

Website: [www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net)

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## Citizens Advice Sunderland

Offer FREE confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person.

Call: 0808 278 7950

Email:

[enquiries@citizensadvicesunderland.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@citizensadvicesunderland.co.uk)

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## Cruse Bereavement Care

Give support after the death of someone close. They can offer one to one counselling and further support for adults, children and adolescents.

Call their helpline: 0808 808 1677

Website: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk)

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# Useful phone numbers and links

## Dementia UK

Specialist dementia nursing charity that is here for the whole family. Their nurses, known as admiral nurses, provide free, life-changing support and advice to anyone affected by dementia.

**Dementia helpline:** 0800 888 6678

**Website:** [www.dementiauk.org](http://www.dementiauk.org)

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## Dementia Support Forum

Available 24/7 via the telephone, home visits or online.

For people with dementia and their carers, family and friends this online support community is for people with dementia, carers, family and friends to discuss all aspects of dementia.

Provided by the Alzheimer's Society. Please contact for details of any costs.

**Email:**

[dementiasupportforum@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:dementiasupportforum@alzheimers.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.forum.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.forum.alzheimers.org.uk)

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## Essence Service

Age UK Sunderland dementia hub, the Essence Service, offers a wide range of personalized support services for the person with dementia and their carers.

**Call:** 0191 522 1310

**Email:**

[essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk](mailto:essenceservice@ageuksunderland.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.essenceservice.org.uk](http://www.essenceservice.org.uk)

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## Independent Age

The national charity focused on improving the lives of people facing financial hardship in later life.

Their helpline and expert advisers offer free, practical support to older people without enough money to live on.

**Call:** 0800 319 6789

**Website:** [www.independentage.org](http://www.independentage.org)

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## North East Befriending Service

A high level support service which offers:

- Transport
- Smooth discharge from hospital to home
- Cleaning service
- Grocery shopping
- Handyman
- Exercise + nutrition advice

There are costs for these services.

**Call:** 07909 006 554

**Email:** [judith@nebs.org.uk](mailto:judith@nebs.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.nebs.org.uk](http://www.nebs.org.uk)

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## Rare Dementia Support

Have a dedicated direct support team who provide free information, advice and support for members; helping from pre-diagnosis navigation through to post-bereavement support.

Find out more about their direct support team.

**Call:** 020 3318 0243 (leave a voicemail, someone will get back to you)

**Email:** [contact@raredementiasupport.org](mailto:contact@raredementiasupport.org)

**Website:** [www.raredementiasupport.org](http://www.raredementiasupport.org)

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## SSAFA Forceline

From SSAFA the armed forces charity and for those in genuine need and with a service connection in a number of ways, such as financial, practical or emotional support. Live chat available.

**Call:** 0800 731 4880

**Email:** [supporter@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:supporter@ssafa.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.SSAFA.org.uk](http://www.SSAFA.org.uk)

**SSAFA Tyne and Wear Branch:**

**Call:** 0191 222 0803

**Website:** [www.SSAFA.org.uk/tyne-wear](http://www.SSAFA.org.uk/tyne-wear)

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# Useful phone numbers and links

## Shelter

Offer information and advice on housing issues.

Call: 0808 800 4444

Website: [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

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## Silverline

Confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK. Open 24/7 all year round.

Call: 0800 470 8090

Website: [www.thesilverline.org.uk](http://www.thesilverline.org.uk)

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## Sunderland Carers Centre

Whether you are caring for young children, parents, grandparents, extended family members or friends, they adopt a "whole family" approach.

Call: 0191 549 3768

Email: [contactus@sunderlandcarers.co.uk](mailto:contactus@sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

Website: [www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandcarers.co.uk)

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## Talking Point

Talking Point is an online community where people with dementia, as well as anyone affected by the condition, are there for each other.

The online community, Talking Point, is there for anyone affected by dementia, including people with a diagnosis themselves.

Website: [www.forum.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.forum.alzheimers.org.uk)

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## The Lewy Body Society

The only charity in the UK, and the first in Europe, dedicated exclusively to Lewy body dementia.

Call: 01942 914000

Email: [info@lewybody.org](mailto:info@lewybody.org)

Website: [www.lewybody.org](http://www.lewybody.org)

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## Wearside Women in Need

For people who have been affected by domestic abuse, or are worried they might be at risk of domestic abuse.

Helpline: 0800 066 5555 (open everyday 9am - 9pm)

Website: [www.wwin.org.uk](http://www.wwin.org.uk)

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## Health

### NHS

Always keep your GP surgery's telephone number by your telephone, just in case!

### NHS 111

If you're worried about a symptom and not sure what help you need, NHS 111 can tell you what to do next.

Visit: [www.111.nhs.uk](http://www.111.nhs.uk)

Call: 111

### In an emergency

For a life-threatening emergency call 999.

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### Marie Curie

Support for people living with any terminal illness, and their families.

Call: 0800 090 2309

Website: [www.mariecurie.org.uk](http://www.mariecurie.org.uk)

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# Useful phone numbers and links

## Making a complaint

### Advice and Complaints Service

Sunderland Royal Hospital, Sunderland Eye Infirmary and South Tyneside District Hospital are all part of South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT).

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the care you receive from any of the Trust's services, or you just have a question about your care, you can contact the Advice and Complaints Service.

**Call:** 0191 569 9855  
or freephone 08005876513

**Email:**  
[stsft.adviceandcomplaints@nhs.net](mailto:stsft.adviceandcomplaints@nhs.net)

**Website:** [www.stsft.nhs.uk](http://www.stsft.nhs.uk) (search 'Advice and complaints').

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### Complaints about mental health services

If you have a complaint about any of the services which are part of Cumbria, Northumberland, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear (CNTW) their Patient Liaison Service (PALs) can offer confidential advice and support, helping you to sort out any concerns that you may have about any aspect of your or your loved ones care.

**Call:** : 0800 328 4397 or 0191 566 7074

**Email:** [pals@cntw.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@cntw.nhs.uk)

**Website:** [www.cntw.nhs.uk](http://www.cntw.nhs.uk) (search 'Patient Advice and Liaison Service').

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### Care Quality Commission

The independent regulator of health and social care in England.

**Call:** 03000 61 61 61  
**Website:** [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

### VoiceAbility, Advocacy Service

NHS complaints advocates support people to complain about the treatment or care that they or a friend or family member have received from an NHS service. This support is available at every stage of the complaints process.

**Call:** 0300 303 1660

**Email:** [helpline@voiceability.org](mailto:helpline@voiceability.org)

**Website:** [www.voiceability.org](http://www.voiceability.org)  
(search 'NHS complaints advocacy')

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### Social care complaints

If possible you should first raise your concerns with the person providing your service or their manager.

Sunderland City Council are pleased to hear from anyone who has comments or complaints about their services as these help them to plan and improve their services.

**Call:** 0191 561 2464 or 0782 708 4212  
0191 520 5552 (if outside of normal office hours).

**Email:** [complaints@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@sunderland.gov.uk)

**Website:**  
[www.sunderland.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/complaints)

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### Healthwatch Sunderland

If you wish to make a complaint about any health or care service and feel unsure about where to turn, please call and the team will signpost you to the right complaint pathway depending on the service involved.

**Call:** 0191 514 7145

**Email:** [healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net)

**Website:**  
[www.healthwatchsunderland.com](http://www.healthwatchsunderland.com)  
(search 'complaint').

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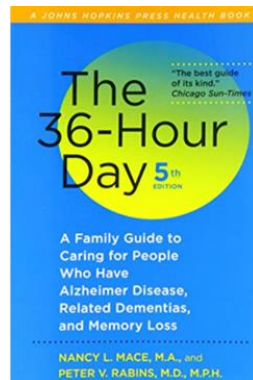
## Useful reading

Here are a selection of books which you may find useful. Find them in your local library, book shop or online store.

### The 36-Hour Day

A family guide to caring for people who have Alzheimer Disease and other dementias.

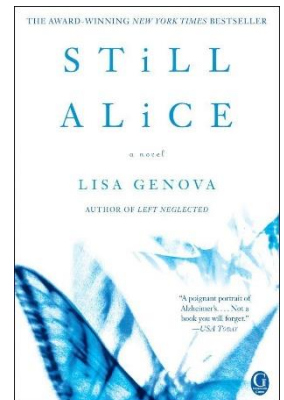
Authors: Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins



### Still Alice

A linguistics professor and her family find their bonds tested when she is diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease.

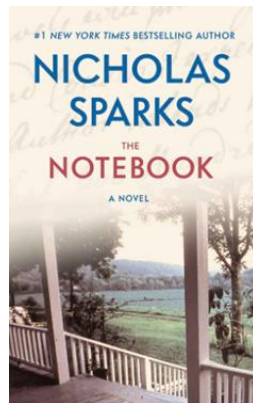
Author: Lisa Genova



### The Notebook

A man reads a notebook to a woman with Alzheimer's, recounting their timeless love story.

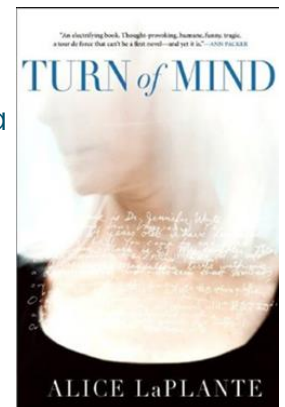
Author: Nichola Sparks



### Turn of Mind

About a retired surgeon with dementia clings to bits of reality through anger, frustration, shame and unspeakable loss.

Author: Alice LaPlante



### Elizabeth is missing

An elderly woman descending into dementia embarks on desperate quest to find the best friend she believes has disappeared, and her search for the truth will go back decades and have shattering consequences.

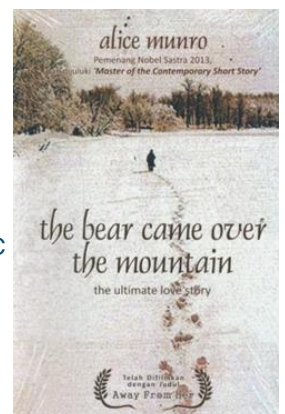
Author: Emma Healey



### The bear came over the mountain

Fiona, moves into a home for individuals with dementia. There, Fiona starts a romantic relationship with another resident, Aubrey, and seems to forget her husband.

Author: Alice Munro





# Thank you to our partners

This work would not have been possible without the support from our partners and local carers with lived experience of living and supporting a loved one with a dementia diagnosis. Thank you on behalf of all at Healthwatch Sunderland for your time, your passion and your commitment to producing this booklet. It is hoped it will support and improve the lives of people experiencing memory difficulties, dementia and their carers across the City of Sunderland.

Thank you to:

## Local carers







**Website: [healthwatchsunderland.com](http://healthwatchsunderland.com)**

**Call: 0191 5147145**

**Email: [healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchsunderland@pcp.uk.net)**

 **@HWSunderland**

 **Facebook.com/HWSunderland**

 **Instagram.com/healthwatchsunderland**