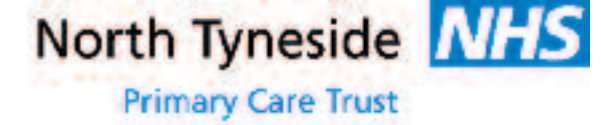


North Tyneside Council wants to make it easier for you to get hold of the information you need. We can provide this information in other languages and in different formats, such as large print, Braille or audiotape. For more details, please contact us on:  
Tel: 0191 200 8181 • Fax: 0191 200 1700



North Tyneside

# Age - a positive attitude

Information and advice for older people in North Tyneside

We can provide this information in other languages and in different formats, such as large print, Braille or audiotape.

For more details, please contact us on:

Telephone: SMS/Text Messages:  
Fax: Email:

### Hindi

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फैक्स: 0191 200 1700

### Polish

Możemy dostarczyć te informacje w innych językach i różnej formie, takich jak druk większą czcionką, alfabetem Braille'a lub taśmą magnetyczną. Aby uzyskać więcej informacji, proszę się z nami skontaktować za pomocą poniższych sposobów:-  
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Faks: 0191 200 1700

### Cantonese

是項資料有不同語言的翻譯本，及大字、凸字或錄音帶版本供索取。詳情請電：電話：0191 200 8181  
傳真：0191 200 1700

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আমরা আপনাকে অন্য এক ভাষায় বা অন্য এক রকমের মাধ্যমে, যেমন বড় অক্ষর করে, ব্রেইল বা অডিও টেপে এই তথ্যসমূহ সরবরাহ করতে পারি। আর বিস্তারিত জানতে অন্য ব্যক্তিদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন:-  
টেলিফোন:  
০১৯১ ২০০ ৮১৮১  
ফ্যাক্স: ০১৯১ ২০০ ১৭০০

### Albanian

Ne mund ta ofrojmë këtë informacion në gjuhë të tjera dhe në formate të ndryshme si në shkronja të mëdha, në një formë të shkronjave për të veshur ose në kasetë dëgjimi. Për informacion të mëtejshëm, ju lutem na kontaktoni në:  
Telefon: 0191 200 8181  
Faks: 0191 200 1700

### Urdu

ہم یہ معلومات آپ کو دیگر زبانوں اور دیگر صورتوں میں بھی فراہم کر سکتے ہیں مثلاً بڑی چھاپائی میں اور بڑے فونٹ میں۔ مزید تفصیلات کے لئے ملاحظہ فرمائیں۔  
ٹیلی فون : 0191 200 8181  
فیکس : 0191 200 1700

### Russian

Эту информацию мы можем предоставить Вам на других языках в других форматах, например, крупным шрифтом, печатью Брайля для слепых или на аудиокассетах:  
Телефон: 0191 200 8181  
Факс: 0191 200 1700

### Farsi

ما می توانیم این اطلاعات را به زبان های دیگر و همچنین در فرمت های مختلف مانند حروف بزرگ، نوشتن بریل و نوار صوتی (کاست) در اختیار شما بگذاریم. برای اطلاعات بیشتر لطفاً با ما از طریق زیر تماس حاصل نمایید:  
تلفن: 0191 200 8181  
فکس: 0191 200 1700

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Unicorn House  
Suez Street  
North Shields  
NE30 1BB

Age Concern North Tyneside  
Bradbury Centre  
13 Saville Street West  
North Shields  
NE29 6QP

Tel: 0191 200 8181  
Fax: 0191 200 1700

Tel: 0191 280 8484  
Fax: 0191 280 8485

Web: www.northtyneside.gov.uk

Minicom: 0191 280 8486

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## Introduction

**Every day we all grow older. In North Tyneside we're committed to building a community that values and supports the achievements and contributions of our older people.**

Older people in the borough are increasingly playing a crucial role by volunteering, sharing experience and knowledge and helping their families with caring responsibilities or in paid work. These contributions can only be ensured if older people too, enjoy good health and if our borough can address their needs.

This booklet aims to make sure you're getting the best out of the borough and know where to find information if you need further support. It will help you to take advantage of the many opportunities there are in North Tyneside and to maintain your health and independence.



*John Harrison*  
**John Harrison,  
Elected Mayor of  
North Tyneside**

The production of this booklet is a great example of the invaluable contributions of our older people and on behalf of North Tyneside Council, Age Concern North Tyneside and North Tyneside Primary Care Trust, I would like to acknowledge and thank the following for their help:

Michael Spicer, Doug Judge, John Casson, Eileen Morley, Nora Cunningham, Muriel Grist, Audrey Young, Norma Playle, Mary Gill



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# A positive attitude

“ I’m 65, but that doesn’t mean I have to sit in a chair all day, staring at the TV. I like to get out, meet new people and have a good old chat. I’d get depressed if I stayed at home on my own. ”



## Awareness

Life is what you make it and it doesn't have to stop just because you're getting older. Think about your interests and hobbies and plan for your future years. Make sure you get good advice on benefits and other money-matters. Older people can get help with rent, council tax, mortgage payments and many other things. Advice and support is also available to help you get more involved in activities in your area.



## Action

Visit your local library to find out what's going on in your area. There may be many local events and organisations that you have not been aware of. Many organisations are looking for volunteers and support - so get in touch. Age Concern North Tyneside offer many social, health and learning activities including accessible short courses to get people started using computers.



## Talk to

Talk to friends and neighbours about what they've found locally. Talk to local organisations and find out about local day or community centres. Age Concern North Tyneside has a wealth of information that help older people live more active lives.



## Prevention

Growing older is inevitable, but your outlook on life, health and lifestyle can make the difference between slipping into old age or embracing it and all it has to offer!

### WEBLINKS

[www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.bbb.co.uk](http://www.bbb.co.uk) • [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) • [www.silversurfers.net](http://www.silversurfers.net) • [www.age-net.co.uk](http://www.age-net.co.uk) • [www.seniority.co.uk](http://www.seniority.co.uk) • [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) • [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk) • [www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk](http://www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk)

### EMAIL

Age Concern North Tyneside enquiries@ageconcernnorthtyne.org • central.library@northtyneside.gov.uk



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- Learn Direct  
Tel: 0800 101 901
- University of the Third Age (U3A)  
National Office:  
Tel: 020 8466 6139
- Reach North East  
Tel: 01670 516293
- North Tyneside Learning Centre  
Tel: 0191 200 6010
- Libraries and on-line learning  
Tel: 0191 200 5424
- North Tyneside Council Customer Services  
Tel: 0845 2000 101

- Whatever age, life is what you make it
- A positive attitude makes a big difference
- There are financial advantages to being over 60
- Make the most of the time retirement brings
- Use the Internet and join other 'silver surfers'

## Making more of life

You can't stop getting older, but that doesn't mean you have to stop doing the things you enjoy. In fact, many people find that life really begins when they stop working, because they finally have the time to do all the things they couldn't do in their younger, working days.

A positive attitude to life means taking the time and effort to do the things you enjoy, keeping healthy and active and making the most of what's on offer.

### The benefits of 60+

The good news is that there are lots of financial benefits once you hit 60. While some may depend on your financial status, they include:

- Free prescriptions and eye tests.
- An increase in tax allowances (at 65) and other monetary benefits.
- Winter fuel payments.
- Concessions on adult education classes, theatre, hairdressers etc.
- Travel concessions.

### What's on offer

Having a positive outlook means making the most of what's on offer - and there are plenty of things to do that don't cost a lot, or are free.

These include visiting local parks and gardens, museums, galleries and libraries. Your local library should also have information and leaflets about places of interest, events and talks. You could join a group or organisation that interests you, such as a drama or walking group. There are now also many websites, aimed specifically at older people, such as [www.silversurfers.net](http://www.silversurfers.net) and [www.age-net.co.uk](http://www.age-net.co.uk)

Computers are available in all our libraries, providing free, high-speed access to the Internet. You can also use the computers to send an email, write a letter, produce a CV, set up a spreadsheet, or look at digital images. Registered library members can logon to a computer using their library card number and PIN.

A North Tyneside Council Ease Card gives you great discounts on a huge variety of activities in our sport and leisure and community centres. Contact the North Tyneside Council Customer Services Department for more information.

### Local services

Local organisations and culturally specific organisations in North Tyneside offer plenty of local help and advice. There are day and community centres, which give you the chance to meet people, try new activities and go on trips.

If you find it hard to get out and about or are worried about meeting new people, local organisations can help. If you're active and keen to help others, volunteering can be stimulating, contact Age Concern North Tyneside or REACH.

If you feel you could help someone with their reading, writing and maths and would like to gain a City and Guilds Level 2 in Adult Learner Support, call the Learning Centre (see contacts opposite).

Use your time positively - meet new people, develop new interests and discover new places. This may take time and effort but you'll enjoy the rewards.

# Accident prevention at home

“Slipping on the wet bathroom floor gave me a nasty shock. It could have been a lot worse if I'd broken my hip instead of just bruising it and I might have lain there for hours. Now I'm a lot more careful.”



## Awareness

As you get older, the risk of having a fall increases. Inform your GP or nurse if you have a fall as you may be at risk of having further falls. It's important to make an action plan of what to do if you should fall.



## Action

Check to see how you can make your home safer, room by room. Install stair and hand rails if necessary. Check loose carpets and make sure items that you use every day are within reach.

Take extra care if you get up during the night, and always put on a light. Keep active and eat well - it makes you stronger and less likely to slip, trip or fall.

Having a Care Call alarm system in your home provides peace of mind. Anyone can refer themselves to this service by phone or letter. Call centre staff are on duty 24 hours a day, every day. They will listen, give advice, provide support, contact relatives, doctors and/or other agencies on behalf of the caller, if that person is unable to do so. Contact North Tyneside Council for more information. Age Concern North Tyneside can also supply details about the Aid Call alarm service.



## Talk to

Falls are not an inevitable part of getting older and support can be provided to you. Evidence shows that once an older person has had a fall, they may often fall again, so tell your GP or nurse if you have had a fall.



## Prevention

Age Concern North Tyneside and Help the Aged have information leaflets about fall prevention. You should also talk to your GP if you feel you need help walking. Remaining fit and mobile will help strengthen your bones reducing the risk of falls.

Drink plenty of fresh water - especially in warm weather - to keep yourself hydrated. Dehydration can cause dizziness and confusion. Make sure you get plenty of rest too.

## WEBLINKS

[www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.whi.org](http://www.whi.org) • [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)  
See links to your NHS Primary Care Trust



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- Help the Aged  
Tel: 0870 1502 500 (orderline for information leaflets)
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service  
Tel: 0191 444 1500
- Adult Social Care, First Call  
Tel: 0191 200 6050
- Care Call helpline  
Tel: 0191 200 6800
- North Tyneside Anchor Staying Put  
Tel: 0191 295 1011
- Your GP

- Check your home for any possible hazards
- Make an action plan now of what to do if you fall
- If you fall, get help and keep warm
- Consider a pendant alarm to get help quickly
- Always tell your GP or nurse if you or your spouse or partner has had a fall

## Reducing the risk of falls

Being fit and active can help to reduce your risk of having a fall by maintaining muscle strength. Eat a healthy balanced diet, with regular meals and healthy snacks containing calcium and vitamin D, e.g. dairy produce, fruit, green vegetables and oily fish. However active you are, you may find that at times you find it hard to balance, that your reaction times are slower, your muscles and joints are weaker and that your eyesight is deteriorating. It is important that your home is a safe place. Make your home clutter-free and easy to move around. Make sure you have an action plan and think about how you will get help if you fall and cannot get up. You need to avoid having a long lie on the floor, especially in the cold. Consider getting a pendant alarm.

### Minimise the risks by:

- Keeping clutter off the floor and stairs.
- Using high wattage, energy efficient bulbs.
- Wearing flat, well-fitting shoes.
- Getting help carrying heavy objects.
- Arranging regular health and eye tests.
- Doing gentle exercise to improve balance - Age Concern North Tyneside run Tai Chi classes.

To minimise the risk of fire in your home, Tyne & Wear Firefighters can visit you and offer simple advice on fire safety, tailored specifically to your needs. They can also, where necessary fit free smoke detectors, and in certain cases, provide a deep fat fryer to replace a conventional chip pan.

### Handyperson and Garden Care Schemes

A scheme operates in the borough for a variety of small odd jobs that you may not be able to manage to do yourself. A small charge

applies. Contact Anchor Staying Put for more information. There is also a garden care scheme for people aged 70 and over, a small charge applies. Contact North Tyneside Council for more information.

### In the bathroom

Test bath water, to prevent scalding. Use a non-slip rubber mat to stop you sliding when you get into the bath, and a hand rail is useful if you need extra support. It's a good idea to leave the door unlocked in case you need help.

### In the bedroom

Always switch off your electric fire or blanket before getting into bed. Regularly check their cords for scorch marks. Before getting into bed, make sure that anything you need is within easy reach - a lamp, drink, medication and it's a good idea to have a torch by the bedside. If you feel dizzy when you first sit up, wait a couple of minutes before standing up.

### In the living area

If rugs are frayed, it is safer to remove them. To prevent having to bend, make sure everyday objects, such as the telephone, remote control or appliances are kept within easy reach. Fitting a letter tray to your letterbox will also reduce bending. Regularly have fire and gas equipment checked, contact your supplier for details on how to arrange this. Check smoke alarm batteries regularly.

### What to do if you fall

- Think of your action plan.
- Call for help.
- Keep warm, covering yourself with anything available.
- Rest before you try to get up if you are able to do so.

# Coping with bereavement

“ I always thought it would be me that went first. I just didn't think about him not being here, taking care of things. I'd feel completely helpless if it weren't for my friends and family being here to support me. ”



## Awareness

You will experience many emotions, some of them unexpected, but try to accept your feelings and understand they are a normal part of grieving. People often describe shock soon after the death of a partner or loved one. They may feel numb, panicky, very weepy or unable to cry at all.



## Action

Ask someone to help you with the practicalities, such as informing friends and family, choosing a funeral director and getting the death certificate from the Register Office.



## Talk to

If you feel you are not coping, talk to friends, family and your GP. Grief can trigger physical symptoms too, so talk to your doctor about any problems you are experiencing.



## Prevention

Grieving is a natural process, so take as long as you need to come to terms with your bereavement. Don't feel you should be 'getting over it' as this will just make you feel worse. If you feel you are becoming depressed, talk to your GP.

### WEBLINKS

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) (look under bereavement) • [www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### EMAIL

Cruse: [helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk](mailto:helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk)  
Age Concern North Tyneside: [office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org](mailto:office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org)  
The Samaritans: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)



## Contacts

- To make an appointment to register a death  
Tel: 0191 200 6117
- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- CRUSE (helpline)  
Tel: 0870 167 1677
- Pension Service  
Tel: 0845 606 0265
- Citizens Advice Bureau  
Tel: 0870 126 4747
- Samaritans  
Tel: 0191 232 7272
- Pet Bereavement Support Service  
Tel: 0800 096 6606

- Even an expected death can come as a shock
- Ask your funeral director for advice on arrangements
- Expect emotional mood swings
- Look after yourself in your grief
- Get as much support as you can
- Let yourself grieve for as long as you need
- Help those closest to you by preparing legal matters and wills in advance

## Your changing emotions

Coming to terms with the death of a loved one is very difficult, even if that person had been ill for some time and the death was expected. You will find that you go through a range of emotions after a death.

As well as sadness and a longing for what has gone, you may also feel fear, guilt, numbness, let down by the person who has died, shame for feeling so helpless, and anger. Anger is a common part of grieving, anger at the person who has died, at oneself for still being alive, at friends and family who do not seem to understand, or at your god for letting it happen. All of these emotions are normal and you should try to accept them as part of the grieving process.

### Being practical

There are a number of practicalities that need to be sorted out after the death. If possible, ask a family member or friend to be with you so you are not alone during the first few days.

- The GP of the deceased must issue a death certificate.
- A funeral director must be appointed to organise the arrangements.
- Friends and family must be notified.
- The death must be registered within five days. You need to take the death certificate with you.
- Notify the pension service.
- Read the will, if there is one.
- You may be entitled to help with funeral expenses.
- Get help with your finances.

### Get support

It is really important that you look after yourself at this time and get as much support as you can. You may have lost interest in eating and have difficulty in sleeping. Try to eat little and often if the thought of a big meal is too much, and rest when you can. If you or a member of your family is worried about you, have a chat with your doctor. Take up any offers of help from friends and family. Even if you do not feel like being sociable, it is still good to have someone with you. This is a difficult time in your life, but you will eventually start to feel better. Make preparations for yourself, see Age Concern England website for information on Wills and Advance Directives (living wills).

The Macmillan Bereavement Service offers bereavement support to adults within North Tyneside. Supportive visits are made to bereaved individuals in their own homes by appropriately trained and supervised volunteers, giving people the opportunity to talk about their loss in confidence. If you feel you could benefit from this service ask your GP or Health Professional to make a referral or call 0191 297 9013 for more information.

### Death of a pet

Losing a much-loved pet can be taken much less seriously than losing a person, however if the pet has been with you for a while, you lose a relationship and a friend.

It is important to allow yourself time to grieve. Take time to talk things over with your family and friends. Don't feel embarrassed about crying as it helps when you to release these feelings. Everyone reacts differently to grief but rest assured that these sad feelings will fade in time.

# Caring for someone else

“ My husband and I have a wonderful relationship - but we've both had to adapt to our changing roles. Since my stroke, he feels more like a nurse than a husband, while I feel helpless rather than being the one in control. ”



## Awareness

Caring can be a rewarding experience and supporting one's loved ones seems the most natural thing to do, however caring can have an effect on your physical, emotional and mental health. It is important that you look after yourself so that your own health does not suffer.



## Action

Do not feel you have to cope alone. If you are caring for someone, you may be entitled to benefits and services. In North Tyneside there are three main sources of support for carers: North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care, health services such as your doctor, and a range of voluntary and community organisations who can provide information and support.



## Talk to

Talk to your local Carers Centre about your situation. They can advise you on what help you may be entitled to. Talk to your doctor and let them know that you are caring for someone. You can ask if they can refer you to local support services that are appropriate to your needs. Contact North Tyneside Adult Social Care to find out about the Carer's Assessment Process and to see if you or the person you care for are entitled to any support.



## Prevention

If you feel overwhelmed by your caring responsibilities, there are people you can turn to. Carers organisations offer counselling and emotional support. North Tyneside Council has produced a guide for Carers in North Tyneside that contains a wealth of information and advice on a range of topics. To request a copy contact the Service User and Carer Engagement Officer on 0191 200 5530.

### WEBLINKS

[www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk) • [www.carers.org/northtyneside](http://www.carers.org/northtyneside) • [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

### EMAIL

Carers Centre: [enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@ntcarers.co.uk)



## Contacts

- To discuss a Carer's Assessment contact North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care First Call Team  
Tel: 0191 200 6800
- For general information, advice and support contact North Tyneside Carers' Centre  
Tel: 0191 200 1111
- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- North Tyneside Alzheimer's Society  
Tel: 0191 257 1245
- Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Tel: 0845 015 0120

- You are not alone - ask for help and support from family, friends, other carers and organisations who work with carers
- 11% of the overall population of North Tyneside provide unpaid care
- A Carers' Assessment will help determine your entitlement to services and support
- Find time for yourself and look after your health

## Shifting responsibilities and adjusting roles

Carers look after family, friends, partners or neighbours in need of help because they are ill, have a disability or are finding it hard to cope for other reasons. Carers are people like every other person. They have relationships, families, hobbies etc. The only difference is that, on top of all of this, they care for someone too.

Caring can happen at any time in someone's life. It is not predictable nor is it something that most people plan for, yet it is something that most people will end up doing at some time in their lives.

### Adjusting to the role of carer

If you are looking after your spouse, partner, parent, friend or other relative because of age, sickness or disability, you have taken on the role of a carer. Becoming a carer can mean making major changes to your life and the life of the person you are caring for. While some of these changes may bring their own rewards, others may take time to adapt to.

In becoming a carer you will be facing issues that you may not have had to deal with before. When you have been equal partners for years, it can be hard for your spouse or partner to adjust to one of you becoming a 'carer' and the other a 'dependent'. A once independent spouse or partner may now need constant attention both physically and emotionally and you may need to deal with problems such as confusion or loss of memory, incontinence and immobility. You

may have been caring for a younger person, maybe a son or a daughter for many years and are now finding it more difficult to cope.

You will also need to get used to other people's new perceptions of you. These days, your spouse or partner, family, friends and new people you meet under these changed circumstances may see you just in the role of a carer rather than the individual you always have been or as a mother, father, wife or husband. Don't be afraid to remind them that you have your own hobbies and interests and are more than just a carer! It's important that you seek help in order to continue your previous activities.

Your role is often a difficult one and it's natural at times, to feel resentment, anger or guilt. These are normal reactions to demanding circumstances, so don't be too hard on yourself. Make the most of support from family, friends and many other local organisations, and take a break when you can - even a few minutes to yourself can sometimes help.

It is often very stressful caring for someone else, however much you love them, and stress lowers your immune system, leaving you more susceptible to injury and illness. It's important that you look after yourself as well as the person you are caring for, which means eating a healthy, balanced diet and trying not to take on more than you can cope with.



### **Making practical changes**

Caring for someone may mean having to make some practical changes. Adaptations and improvements to the home may need to be made to make life easier for both of you. This may include simple adjustments or more major changes such as installing a hoist over the bath, or making a home suitable for wheelchair access. In some cases, it may be necessary to think about moving to a new home, more suitable to current needs.

Lifting or handling the person you are caring for may be physically difficult for you and must be done correctly to prevent injury to yourself. The Council may be able to provide you with an Occupational Therapist, who can give you advice on the best way to do this. Carer Centres will be able to tell you what's available in your local area.

### **Assistance and benefits**

You may be entitled to assistance as a carer. To find out whether this is the case North Tyneside Council Adult Social Care need to discuss with you the needs of the person you care for and what help you give that person, so that they can assess what support services they may be able to provide. This is known as a Carer's Assessment. Services can include providing home care help, providing support at local centres, finding a more suitable home for the person you care for or arranging residential care, if necessary. Residential Care can also be used to give you a short break or respite from your caring role. North Tyneside Council is launching a Carers' Emergency Break Service in 2008.

There are also benefits, in the form of allowances that the person you are caring for may be entitled to, so it's important to contact your local Carer Centre or Age Concern North Tyneside who will be able to advise you.

### **Care homes**

If you are considering a care home you should think about the level of care needed. Some homes provide just personal care while others provide nursing care. Contact North Tyneside Adult Social Care for an assessment of your needs. The person you are caring for will have a say in the choice of home, but may have to pay towards the cost, depending on income and savings. Trial stays or short-term stays can be arranged.

Age Concern North Tyneside can help with providing information on and talk you through the complexity of finding a residential or nursing home and dealing with the issues of charges and funding.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection regulates and inspects care homes. Call them or visit their website to obtain more information.

### **Family life**

It's good to have the support of family, so try and keep in contact, even if you live long distances apart. If you do live close to your family, grandparents are often asked to babysit or care for grandchildren during the day. If



this is the case, it's a good idea to set out reasonable expectations before you start, so everyone knows what is expected of them.

If you are caring for a grandchild that has a disability, you may be entitled to support services from Children Young People and Learning. You can also contact your local Carers Centre for advice.

### **Getting support**

Carers often need support themselves, not only to help cope with the workload, but to deal with their own associated problems, such as stress and depression.

You may not label yourself a carer, but see yourself as doing your duty to look after someone. However, you may be entitled to support services that can greatly improve the quality of your life and that of the person you are caring for. Use the contact numbers in this section or at the back of this booklet.



# Financial matters

“ I had a little money in the bank and owned my own home, so I didn't think I would be entitled to anything. The advisor gave me free advice and practical help with filling in all the forms. Now the little extra I get each month makes a big difference to my quality of life. ”



## Awareness

Many older people are not getting the entitlements they are due because they haven't looked into whether they are eligible or not. Don't miss out - even a small extra payment each week can make a big difference.



## Action

The pension and benefits system can be very complex, so rather than trying to work out on your own what you may be entitled to, and how your savings may affect this, you should seek specialist advice. Act now!



## Talk to

Contact Age Concern North Tyneside or Citizens Advice Bureau to get advice on what benefits you may be entitled to. Banks and building societies have their own financial advisors, but you are not obligated to take their advice. Alternatively, an independent financial advisor can give you advice that is independent of any institution, but check their fees first.



## Prevention

You may be entitled to financial help and support. Many people find it difficult to make ends meet because they are not claiming the benefits they are entitled to - All you have to do is ask. Age Concern North Tyneside and the Citizens Advice Bureau provide confidential advice about any aspect of your life including Welfare Rights.

### WEBLINKS

[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) •  
[www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) •  
[www.citizensadvicebureau.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicebureau.org.uk)

### EMAIL

Age Concern North Tyneside: [office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org](mailto:office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org) •  
Association of Independent Financial Advisors: [info@aifa.net](mailto:info@aifa.net) •  
[enquiries@warmzones.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@warmzones.co.uk)



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 2808484
- Association of Independent Financial Advisors  
Tel: 020 7628 1287
- North Tyneside Carers Centre  
Tel: 0191 2001111
- Citizens Advice Bureau  
Tel: 0870 126 4747
- Citizens Advice Bureau Debt line  
Tel: 0191 2704485
- Northern Oak Credit Union  
Tel: 0191 2962611
- Warm Zone  
Tel: 0191 223 4199
- Housing and Council Tax enquiries  
Tel: 0845 2000 104

- Many older people are not claiming their entitlements
- Don't assume you're not eligible for entitlements, ask a benefits advisor to assess your financial situation
- Find out how to claim benefits, discounts & allowances, even with savings or owning your own property you may be entitled to some help
- Look at your personal finances regularly and ask an advice agency for help
- Changes such as stopping work, caring for someone or becoming ill can have a significant impact, seek professional advice

## Understanding your entitlements

### Know what you're entitled to

There are many benefits, allowances, discounts and concessions you may be entitled to, even if you have personal savings, occupational pension or own your own home. It is important to try and work out what these are.

Some benefits, such as Council Tax and Housing Benefits, Pension Credit and Funeral Payments are based on your financial circumstances. Other benefits, such as the Winter Fuel Payment and Age Related Allowance, are based purely on your age. Some benefits are based on your care needs, such as the Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Carers Allowance. You are entitled to Attendance Allowance even if you are resident in a nursing home.

### Insurance

As well as being adequately insured for your car, home and contents, check whether you can get a better deal with a different insurer, rather than just renewing your contract.

### Utilities

Check out the best deal from your telephone, gas and/or electric company. You may also save money by installing a water meter or by

getting adequate insulation for your home. Paying your bills by direct debit may be cheaper too. North Tyneside is a Warm Zone borough. A 4-year programme is in place to ensure that as many homes as possible receive energy efficiency measures to reduce fuel poverty. Even if you do not qualify for free installation of measures, they are available at a reduced cost. Contact Warm Zone for more information.

### Banking

Make sure that the bank accounts you currently hold are still the best for your changing needs. Credit Unions offer flexible products such as low interest loans, which may save you a considerable amount of money.

### Debts

In the UK, more people than ever before are in debt, including people aged 60 and over. For older people, many of whom are retired, this can be an especially difficult and frightening position to be in. However, there is free help and advice available so you need not cope alone if you're in debt and don't know what to do about it.





### **Incomings and outgoings**

Income, savings, pensions and taxes are often inter-linked and changes to one can affect how much or how little is paid into the others. As there are often new deals available, get advice on making the most of your money.

### **Power of Attorney**

Remember to think about how your financial matters will be handled after your death and consider giving power of attorney to one of your family members to make sure that your money is distributed as you would wish.

### **Pre-paid funeral plans**

There are many companies who offer a pre-paid funeral arranging service. It is a simple way to provide for your funeral in advance, this will help to reduce the emotional and financial burden on your family and friends. It also means that you know that your wishes will be carried out once you are gone. You may want to check if your family would qualify for a social fund towards the cost of the funeral.

### **Equity release**

Equity release schemes offer older homeowners the chance to get cash for some of the value of their home. Sometimes this will be a lump sum but other schemes will give you regular payments. Before you participate in an Equity Release scheme you must seek independent financial and legal advice to make sure that this is the best way to make your money work for you. Age Concern England produces a useful factsheet.

### **Travel**

You may be entitled to receive travel concessions from your local Council if you are sick or disabled or aged over 60. If you receive Pension Credit you may also be able to get a refund on reasonable travel costs to hospital consultant appointments. Contact organisations such as Age Concern North Tyneside, Citizens Advice Bureau, or Carers Centre for advice.

### **Understanding your entitlements**

While you may know that you are eligible for some entitlements, there may be other benefits you are unaware of, so ask your benefits advisor to check this for you.

These may include:

- Pension Credit
- Working tax credit (if you have not retired)
- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Carers allowance
- Social Fund (such as winter fuel payments, or to help cover extra costs, such as paying for a funeral).

You may be entitled to financial allowances if you need someone to help care for you, you have a physical or mental disability, or if you are a carer.

At 60, you will also be entitled to other concessions, such as free travel, reduced price entry to leisure centres or adult education classes.

### **Attendance Allowance**

This is a tax free benefit for over 65's who have an illness or disability and need help with personal care. It is not affected by your savings or other money you have coming in. The money can be paid directly into an account of your choice. Getting Attendance Allowance may increase other benefits that you are already getting.

### **Disability Living Allowance**

This allowance can be claimed by people who need help in caring for themselves or in getting around because they are ill, disabled or terminally ill. You are not eligible to make a new claim for Disability Living Allowance if you are over 65. In this instance you should consider Attendance Allowance instead.

### **Council tax reductions**

You may be eligible for a reduction of 25% in your Council tax if you live alone. You may also be able to claim a reduction to your bill if your home has been adapted for a disabled person. There are also other discounts and reductions depending on individual circumstances, particularly if someone is ill or disabled, ask for advice.

# Getting out and about

“ I find it hard to get about. Now I know about the transport options available, life can become more interesting. ”



## Awareness

The best way to be able to maintain independence is by remaining mentally and physically active. Getting out and about as much as possible, meeting friends and participating in social events, all help.

There is help and concessions available to help you get out and about. If you have a mobility problem or are confined to a wheelchair there are services available to help you.



## Action

Contact the numbers on this page and ask for details. The sooner you find out the information you need, the sooner you can apply and get out and about.



## Talk to

Ask whether you will need a mobility assessment or if your doctor needs to send information to support your application for travel concessions.

Adult Social Care can provide assistance to enable you to maintain your independence. A community care assessment is the first step in getting the right type of services and support for your social care needs. Contact the Adult Social Care First Call Team who will listen carefully to you and ask questions about the support you, your relative or your friend may need.



## Prevention

It can be isolating and depressing when you find it hard to get out and run daily errands or meet friends. There may be assistance available to you, so find out now whether you are eligible.

**WEBLINKS** [www.nexus.org.uk](http://www.nexus.org.uk)

**EMAIL** [linkup@nexus.org.uk](mailto:linkup@nexus.org.uk) • [access@nexus.org.uk](mailto:access@nexus.org.uk)



## Contacts

- North Tyneside Council Customer Services  
Tel: 0191 2000 101
- Adult Social Care, First Call Team  
Tel: 0191 200 6050
- LinkUp, to book  
Tel: 0191 20 20 666 (any time between 8.00am and 6.00pm)
- TaxiCard Help Desk  
Tel: 0191 203 3460

- Concessionary bus fares
- Metro Gold Card
- LinkUp
- TaxiCard
- Blue Badge Scheme

## Staying mobile

### Concessionary Fares

If you are aged 60 or over, live in North Tyneside and have a Concessionary Travel Pass, you can now travel on buses in England for free. If you are 59, you can apply for your pass one month before your next birthday to ensure you have it ready to use as soon as you reach 60.

Concessionary Travel Passes are free of charge; you have a choice of how to apply for your pass, either by post or in a Travel Shop.

### How about the Shields Ferry?

A trip on the ferry from 9.30am Monday-Friday, all day at weekends and on public holidays is 50p when you show your Concessionary Travel Pass.

### Metro Gold Card

Metro journeys are not free of charge but you can avoid paying full fares by buying an annual Metro Gold Card for a small annual fee. This allows you to Travel on Metro from 9.30am Monday-Friday and all day at weekends and on public holidays.

### LinkUp

LinkUp is a bus service that you book by phone and is available to everyone in Tyne and Wear. It provides journeys at times when regular services are not operating or where direct services are not available. It uses small, modern and fully accessible buses.

LinkUp will pick up and set down at various meeting points. All existing bus stops are meeting points but other meeting points have also been created at other places such as shopping centres, doctors surgeries and leisure facilities. LinkUp can also take you to key interchange points where you can transfer to

other bus services or to Metro. Normal bus fares apply. All valid Traveltickets can be used including Concessionary Travel Passes. So if you are 60 or over and have a Concessionary Travel pass you can travel on LinkUp free.

### TaxiCard

Taxicard holders are able to use this a door-to-door service using accessible taxis subsidised by Nexus for people with mobility difficulties who cannot use low floor buses or Metro.

TaxiCard is a smartcard, the same size as a credit card, and you can use it to pay for part of your journeys by taxi.

The scheme means that you will be able to make the journeys you want to make. You'll be able to book journeys as far in advance as you want or just before you travel, as long as the taxi company has a car available.

### Blue Badge

The Blue Badge Scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for severely disabled people who would otherwise find it impossible to visit public buildings, shops and other places, and for drivers who cannot turn by hand the steering wheel of a vehicle. The disability must be a permanent one and people with temporary disabilities such as a broken leg are not eligible for a badge.

Badges can be issued from any Customer Service Centre upon completion of an application form and receipt of proof of eligibility. Full details of the Blue Badge Scheme are listed in the leaflet: "The Blue Badge Scheme - Parking concessions for disabled and blind people."

# Housing matters

“ I found out I was eligible for a grant towards home improvements. It means I get to stay in my lovely home! ”



## Awareness

As you grow older, you may need to think more carefully about where you live or where you would like to live. Where you live can affect the quality of your life, so it is important to look at all the housing options available to you, to allow you to make a decision that is right for you. The upkeep of a home can become costly and financial options are available to help you. Your home may become too large for you to manage or you may need some adaptations carried out or support to help you stay there.



## Action

Ask for advice and information about ways that you can maintain your own home to a decent living standard, remain independent in your own home or move to a home that will meet your housing, care and support needs.



## Talk to

Talk things through with family and friends or someone you can trust, such as your doctor. Contact Age Concern North Tyneside, Citizens Advice Bureau, housing office or Adult Social Care First Call Team. They can provide information on options available to you. National organisations such as Help the Aged, Counsel and Care and Housing Care produce fact sheets that include renting and purchase options. They also run telephone helplines.



## Prevention

It is better to think about what your future housing need may be and know what you would like, rather than having to make a decision in a crisis. Choosing where and how you live should be your decision and no one should try to persuade you to do something that you are not sure about. If you think you may be at risk of losing your home then contact North Tyneside Homes for advice.

## WEBLINKS

[www.counselandcare.org.uk](http://www.counselandcare.org.uk) • [www.spkweb.org.uk](http://www.spkweb.org.uk) • [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org) • [www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.warmzones.co.uk](http://www.warmzones.co.uk) • [www.housingcare.org](http://www.housingcare.org) • [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)



## Contacts

- North Tyneside Homes  
Tel: 0845 2000 101
- North Tyneside Environmental Health  
Tel: 0845 2000 103
- North Tyneside Warm Zone  
Tel: 0191 223 4199
- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- North Tyneside Citizens Advice Bureau  
Tel: 0870 126 4747
- North Tyneside Anchor Staying Put  
Tel: 0191 295 1011
- Counsel and Care  
Tel: 0845 300 7585
- Housing Care  
Tel: 0800 377 7070
- Adult Social Care, First Call Team  
Tel: 0191 200 6050
- Supporting People  
Tel: 0191 200 8181

- Choosing where and how you live should be your decision
- Where you live can have a great effect on the quality of your life
- Repairs may be needed to make your home safer or more comfortable
- There may be grants available to help with the upkeep of your home

## Staying in your home

### Home improvements

Your home may need some work done to it to make it safer, easier or more comfortable for you to live in. If you are a homeowner with savings then you will probably be responsible for the cost of this work. If you are a homeowner who receives means tested benefits or there is someone in your household who is either aged 60 or over or has a long-term illness or disability, you may qualify for a grant. If you are a private tenant then a grant may be available for any work that is not the responsibility of your landlord to do. Contact North Tyneside Environmental Health (Housing) team for more information.

### A warmer home

North Tyneside is a Warm Zone borough. A four year programme is in place to ensure that as many homes as possible receive energy efficiency measures to reduce fuel poverty. If you do not qualify for free installation of measures, they are available at a reduced cost. Contact Warm Zone for more information.

### Handyperson and garden care schemes

A scheme operates in the borough for a variety of small odd jobs that you may not be able to manage to do yourself. A small charge applies. Contact Anchor Staying Put for more information. There is also a garden care scheme for people aged 70 and over. A small cost applies. Contact North Tyneside Council for more information.

### Changes to your home to maintain independence

To enable you to remain at home, you may have to make some changes to it, such as putting in a stair lift, a walk in shower, or you may need the use of some smaller items. Grants are available for equipment to be installed. A charge may apply for some items.

Contact North Tyneside Adult Social Care for more information.

### Supporting people

This a government programme that encourages people to live as independently as possible by providing help and assistance to those who need some housing related support. It includes a range of services. Contact North Tyneside Supporting People team for more information.

### Council and Registered Social Landlord (Housing Association) tenants

If you are a council or housing association tenant and live in a property that is now too large for you, then you can apply to move to a smaller home. This may be within North Tyneside or to another area to be closer to family or support networks. Contact your landlord for more information.

### Retirement or sheltered housing

These are self-contained properties with support attached to them. Retirement housing is available to buy. Sheltered housing is available to rent. Contact North Tyneside Homes for more information.

### Extra care housing

These are self-contained homes offering 24 hour care and on site support. An assessment is carried out to determine the level of care and support someone needs. Contact North Tyneside Homes for more information.

### Care homes

This type of accommodation provides 24 hour personal care, some also offer nursing care. You will have your own bedroom and will share other facilities such as a dining room or lounge. Contact North Tyneside Adult Social Care for more information on cost and suitability.

# Keeping yourself safe

“Newspapers often make crime levels seem worse than they are. I like to feel safe, but while it's common sense to be careful about security, it doesn't mean I have to turn my home into Fort Knox or be afraid to go out.”



## Awareness

The more aware you are of the potential risks, the less likely you are to be a victim of crime. Take a good look around your home and secure any weak points. When you go out, keep your bag closed and close to your body.



## Action

Check locks on doors and windows to make sure they are secure. Never open the door to anybody unless you can check they are who they say they are. When out, keep to well-lit, busy streets and don't carry large amounts of cash.

If you have suffered a crime, contact the Police immediately and give as many details as you can. If credit cards are stolen, inform the relevant companies and if your keys are missing change the locks. The Police can put you in contact with Victim Support.



## Talk to

Organisations such as Northumbria Police or the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service can give you advice on securing your home. Talk to the Neighbourhood Policing Team to report an incident or crime, to contact your local neighbourhood police officer or to request information or advice. Schemes such as Neighbourhood Watch and Victim Support are there to help you feel more secure.



## Prevention

A call or visit from your local Crime Prevention Adviser offers you impartial, professional advice regarding home security. Best of all it's FREE! You could also Contact Age Concern North Tyneside for advice.

### WEBLINKS

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)  
[www.northumbria.police.uk](http://www.northumbria.police.uk)  
[www.neighbourhoodwatch.net](http://www.neighbourhoodwatch.net)  
[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)  
[www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk)

### EMAIL

[enquiries@ageconcernnorthtyne.org](mailto:enquiries@ageconcernnorthtyne.org)  
[kevin.floyd.5512@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:kevin.floyd.5512@northumbria.pnn.police.uk)



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- North Tyneside Council (customer services)  
Tel: 0845 200 101
- Community Fire Safety Department  
Tel: 0800 0325 999
- Crime Stoppers  
Tel: 0800 555 111
- Fire & Rescue Service  
Tel: 0191 444 1500
- North Tyneside Council Trading Standards  
Tel: 0845 040 506
- Victim Support  
Tel: 0845 30 30 9000 (free confidential support)
- Neighbourhood Policing Team  
Tel: 03456 043 043 (for non-emergencies)
- National Domestic Violence helpline  
Tel: 0800 2000 247
- Crime Prevention Adviser  
Tel: 01661 863133
- **In an emergency always ring 999**

- Research shows that older people are at less risk of crime than other age groups
- Take sensible precautions to reduce the risks and secure your home
- Use a door chain or door bar and do not let strangers into your home without checking their identification is genuine
- Do not part with money before any work has been satisfactorily completed

## Reducing the risks

It can be easy to think that every person who knocks on your door is up to no good, or that youths on the street are all waiting for a chance to pounce. People over 60 are less likely to be victims of crime than any other age group, although it is still important to minimise the risks.

### Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

A Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership includes the police, local authorities, probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector and local people and businesses.

This group of organisations work together in your area to reduce crime and disorder.

### Neighbourhood Wardens

Neighbourhood Wardens provide a visible presence in residential and public areas with the aim of reducing crime and fear of crime; deterring anti-social behaviour; fostering social inclusion and caring for the environment.

### Secure windows and doors

Make sure that you do not leave windows or doors unlocked when you are out or sleeping. Front and back doors should be fitted with five lever mortice locks. If you like a window open at night fit it with a lock so that it can only open a few inches. Locks should be fitted by a qualified Locksmith who should be a member of the Master Locksmiths Association. Make sure you have a chain or door bar on your front door.

### Bogus Callers

Bogus callers are not common but sometimes people may try to gain entry to your property

by pretending that they are from the Council, utility companies or Police, or by saying that they need to use the phone. Use your door chain or door bar and make sure you ask for identification and do not let people into your house if they are unable to provide it. You could also look through a spy hole or window to check that callers are who they say they are. Genuine callers will not mind waiting while you check their identification, you could even telephone the company that they represent if you need to. If work is carried out on your property do not pay for repairs until the work is completed to your satisfaction. If you are unsatisfied with work that you have paid for call Trading Standards or your local Police.

### Out and about

You can reduce your risk of attack by sticking to busy routes where there are plenty of other people about. Keep your house keys separate from your bag so that if it is stolen the thief does not have your address and your keys and you are still able to get into your home. Do not fight any attempt to snatch your bag - you could be seriously injured.

### Peace of mind

Property mark your possessions using a Ultra Violet marker pen and insure your home contents in case of burglary or fire. If you keep valuables at home you should take photographs of them so that you will have a record of what is missing if you are burgled. Do not keep large sums of money at home and keep a list of credit cards and their emergency telephone numbers so that you are able to inform the company if your cards are stolen.

# Looking after your health

“ I know my eyesight is not as good as it used to be but never thought much more of it - until I got my eyes tested. I now wear glasses for reading and driving - it's really made a huge difference to my life. ”



## Awareness

Looking after our teeth and mouth is really important for all of us, including those who wear dentures. A problem with your feet can lead to irritability, fatigue, pain, limited mobility and ultimately a lack of confidence. Proper foot care is essential and should be as much a part of your daily routine as brushing your teeth.



## Action

Everyone should visit the dentist for regular check ups. Even those who wear dentures should visit the dentist once a year. Examine your feet regularly to make sure that they are in good health. Do not let problems go by unchecked.



## Talk to

Always discuss problems with your doctor, pharmacist, dentist or optician. Some conditions can be treated and not all aches and pains are a consequence of getting older. Community Dental Service - ask your GP. They can help if you need a dentist to visit you at home. If you have problems with your feet, it may be necessary to refer you to a Podiatrist (Chiropodist).



## Prevention

Do not wait until you are ill to register with a local doctor. Ensure you have regular dental and sight check ups. If you are over 65 years old, ask your doctor about receiving the flu vaccination. Reduce your sugar intake, brush natural teeth twice a day, look after your dentures and mouth. Smoking can increase your risk of mouth cancer, so try to stop. Make sure that you wash and care for your feet every day. Exercise your feet regularly to maintain circulation, increase muscle tone and strengthen arches.

## WEBLINKS

[www.dentalhealth.org](http://www.dentalhealth.org) • [www.northtynesidepct.nhs.uk](http://www.northtynesidepct.nhs.uk)



## Contacts

- Department of Podiatry, Victoria Therapy Centre  
Tel: 0191 282 8080
- British Dental Health Foundation Dental Helpline  
Tel: 0845 063 1188
- NECA (for structured alcohol advice and counseling)  
Tel: 0191 270 8495
- Newcastle and North Tyneside Addictions Service  
Tel: 0191 219 5600
- North Tyneside PROPS (support for parents and carers of alcohol users)  
Tel: 0191 296 2277
- Drinkline  
Tel: 0800 917 8282 (9am-11pm, Monday to Friday)

- It is never too late to improve your health
- Know what medicines you are taking and what they do for you
- Have regular check-ups including eye tests and dental appointments
- Stick to the recommended guidelines. Men should drink no more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day and women no more than 2-3.
- Take part in social activities that do not involve drinking alcohol, for example keep-fit classes

## A healthy body and mind

As a society we are living longer and we now have far more time to enjoy our retirement. It is important to remember that it is never too late to start to make changes to your lifestyle and routines in order to improve your health and wellbeing and ensure that your later years are not hampered by ill health.

### Sight

People over 60 years old are eligible for a free NHS sight test. If the test shows that you need glasses, you may also be eligible for help with the cost of glasses.

### Dental care

Regular dental check ups are very important. If you are on a low income or receiving certain benefits you may be entitled to free treatment.

- Looking after your teeth can prevent gum disease and tooth decay.
- If you've lost some or all of your teeth, wearing dentures means you can eat more of the foods you love, and feel more confident when you smile.
- There's lots of help available for you if you find it hard to keep your teeth clean.
- Aim to visit the dentist or hygienist regularly instead of when you have a problem.
- You might be able to get help with paying for dental treatment.

### Reduce your sugar intake

- Reduce the frequency and amount of sugar you have each day. Try to keep it just to mealtimes and avoid it completely in the hour before bedtime and during the night.
- Between meals try to have snacks and drinks that do not contain sugar, as this will help to reduce the risk of tooth decay.

### Brush natural teeth twice a day

- Brush your teeth twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste, spitting out the excess toothpaste when you have finished and not rinsing.
- Always brush last thing at night before you go to bed and one other time during the day.
- If you have problems holding a toothbrush speak to your dentist about how to adapt the handle to make it easier to hold. Alternatively you may find it easier to use an electric toothbrush because of the thicker handle and the movement of the head.

### Look after your dentures and mouth

- Ideally dentures should be cleaned after every meal and at bedtime.
- It is important to give your mouth a "rest" from wearing dentures, so leave them out during the night.
- When you clean your dentures, clean the inside of your mouth using a soft toothbrush, this will help to keep your gums and tongue healthy.
- If a denture is broken it can be repaired free of charge at an NHS dental practice.

### Remember

- Smoking can increase your risk of mouth cancer, so try to stop.
- The prevalence of gum disease is higher and more severe amongst smokers than non-smokers.
- If you have any red or white patches, mouth ulcers that do not heal in 10-14 days, if your tongue feels numb or any lumps appear make an appointment with your dentist as soon as possible.



### Basic foot care tips

Keeping feet clean is an essential part of any good healthy feet regime. Wash feet every day in warm soapy water, rinse well and dry thoroughly. You may need to apply moisturiser, massage the cream from the toes upwards to the knees but do not apply between the toes themselves. If your feet get very moist because of heavy perspiration, dab them with surgical spirit after washing. Wearing cotton or woollen socks, rather than ones made of synthetic material can also help. Trim your toenails regularly, cutting straight across and making sure that you do not cut them too short.

It is very important to buy shoes that fit your feet properly. This prevents problems and also gives you extra stability; wearing the correct footwear can help prevent falls if you are unsteady on your feet.

Exercise can really help to keep feet healthy as it tones muscles, strengthens arches and improves blood circulation.

### Remember

If you experience any pain something is most likely wrong. It is important to seek prompt treatment, particularly if you have diabetes. People suffering from diabetes often suffer from poor circulation and loss of sensation in their feet meaning that problems may go unnoticed unless they examine their feet regularly.

### Sexual health Your changing body

The younger generation often assume that sexual intimacy disappears once you reach 60. The truth is that desiring sex and having sexual relations doesn't diminish as we get older.

It's an inevitable fact that, however young we feel inside, physically our body is changing. You may also be suffering from sexual problems related to age. Men may find it more difficult to get and maintain an erection, while women find lubrication a problem. Erectile dysfunction can be a sign

of other health problems, so do speak to your GP. These problems should not be just accepted as a part of growing older, your GP can probably help you, so don't be embarrassed to ask for advice.

### Maintaining a relationship

When you have been with your spouse or partner for a great number of years, it can be easy to slip out of intimacy and into companionship.

Good communication will help you to discuss ways of maintaining a close sexual relationship that suits both your needs. If you are alone in your later years, socialising or taking up a new hobby can introduce you to people with similar interests. There are dating agencies that cater for older people.

- Sexual desire doesn't disappear as you become older.
- Older people enjoy active sex lives.
- Maintain intimacy in your relationship - keep the romance going.
- Dating agencies cater for all ages.
- Don't let sexual problems prevent you from having an intimate relationship. Discuss your concerns with your GP who will be able to advise you and discuss possible treatment.
- Remember, safe sex isn't just for younger people - Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) can affect anyone.

### Alcohol

As you get older it becomes more important to reduce how much and how often you drink because alcohol has greater effect on the body.

If your drinking is causing you some concern there is no shame in seeking advice and support to address these problems.

### Safe drinking

Although most people tend to drink less as they get older, some people still drink more than is safely recommended. One unit of alcohol is the equivalent of one pub measure of spirits, a half pint of lager, a small glass of wine or a small sherry. However, the measures that you pour at home are likely to be larger than pub measures, and thus contain more units of alcohol.

It is recommended that men should drink no more than 3-4 units a day and women no more than 2-3. Drink alcohol on no more than 5 days a week and have a day off between drinking days. Drinking more than this can lead to significant health problems. Older people may be more vulnerable to the effects of alcohol, so drinking less is recommended. If you are drinking in company, pace yourself. You don't have to keep up with everyone else!

### What are the long-term effects of alcohol?

Heavy continuous drinking can cause a huge variety of problems including:

- Liver disease
- High blood pressure and heart disease.
- Fragile bones and fractures.
- Cancers, for example liver, breast or gullet cancer.
- Damage to the nerves in the legs resulting in falls and difficulty walking.
- Memory loss and permanent brain damage.

### Can I drink when I am taking medication?

Many tablets and medicines cause problems with alcohol and you may need to stop drinking altogether. Painkillers and sleeping tablets are particularly affected by alcohol. You should always check with your doctor or pharmacist before drinking if you are taking medication.

### Finding it hard to cope?

Drinking too much alcohol is often closely linked with changes in mood. Sometimes people drink alcohol to help them deal with loss. People might drink to help them cope with the death of a loved one, or the loss of other things like a job, independence, health or status.

People sometimes use alcohol to cope with feelings of anxiety. It might feel like alcohol takes the anxiety away, but in the long term it is likely to make the problem worse. In small amounts, alcohol can help you feel more sociable, confident and relaxed. If you think you are using alcohol to cope with depression, anxiety or loss it might be a good idea to talk to someone about different ways of coping.

# Maintaining independence

“ I needed help, but was worried about contacting Social Services in case they said I had to leave my flat. But they were very helpful and sent someone to assess my situation. I get to stay in my own home, but now have regular home care to lend a hand with things I find difficult. ”



## Awareness

Living in your own home, surrounded by possessions and years of personal history, is important to all of us. But looking after yourself and maintaining a home with cleaning, shopping and cooking can become more difficult as age affects speed and mobility. That's why it's important to seek help early on.



## Action

With regular support and assistance, you are more likely to be able to maintain your independence and enjoy life in the comfort of your own home. The best way to maintain this independence is by remaining mentally and physically active. It sounds obvious but do try to get out and about as much as possible, meet friends, take up hobbies and eat healthily. There is a wide range of services available in North Tyneside to help you do just this and contribute your vital skills and experiences to your local community.



## Talk to

As a first step, contact Age Concern North Tyneside or North Tyneside Council's Adult Social Care who will guide you through the range of opportunities available.



## Prevention

It is better you seek help early on and get the assistance you need, rather than leaving it too late and not being able to manage in your own home. No one wants you to leave the security of your own home, if that is what's best for you.

### WEBLINKS

[www.stayingput.org.uk](http://www.stayingput.org.uk) • [www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.northtynesidepct.nhs.uk](http://www.northtynesidepct.nhs.uk) • [www.assist-uk.org.uk](http://www.assist-uk.org.uk) • [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

### EMAIL

Age Concern North Tyneside: [enquiries@ageconcernnorthtyne.org](mailto:enquiries@ageconcernnorthtyne.org)



## Contacts

- Adult Social Care First Call Team  
Tel: 0191 200 6050
- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- NHS Direct  
Tel: 0845 4647
- Direct payment advice and information service  
Tel: 01865 728994
- Disabled Living Foundation  
Tel: 020 7289 6111
- North Tyneside Carers Centre  
Tel: 0191 200 1111
- Care Call  
Tel: 0191 200 6800

- Asking for support will help you to cope, many local organisations can provide assistance
- You can maintain your independence at home
- Consider whether you want to move to a smaller or sheltered property
- Contact your GP, district nurse or Adult Social Care to find out about community health services
- You may be entitled to payments to meet your needs

## Support at home

### Contacting your GP

If you have any concerns about your health, contact your local GP in the first instance. Your GP may refer you to someone in the community health service, such as a district nurse or physiotherapist, community psychiatric nurse, or continence advisor.

Talking to your community pharmacist can often solve many minor problems.

Problems, such as corns or bunions, can cause you major difficulties in getting around, so don't feel you are being a nuisance by asking for help for minor ailments. If you have a query about a health problem, you can also contact NHS Direct.

### Keeping well in winter

It is important to keep warm during cold weather. There are a number of useful tips in leaflets from Help the Aged and local Keep Warm Keep Well campaigns. These are available via the NHS website, Age Concern and Help the Aged.

Ask your GP about the flu vaccination, if you are over 65 or have a long-term medical condition such as asthma or diabetes you are entitled to a free flu jab. Flu is an unpleasant illness and younger people can usually cope with and recover from it. However, older people are more susceptible to its effects and should therefore take up the opportunity to be vaccinated each year.

### Prevention

Many people tell us that they can manage with the help and support from family members and friends but would feel reassured if they had someone to call on in an emergency.

Care Call is just such a service. It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year and enables you to request help from your home in an emergency. You can use either a telephone or pendant worn around your neck to raise the alarm and a trained member of staff will contact you immediately or call out where necessary to help.

Many people who have the Care Call system fitted in their home have never had to use the service but are reassured to know help is there if needed.

There is normally a small weekly charge for the service and you can contact Care Call directly to see how they could assist you.

North Tyneside Council is launching a Carers' Emergency Break Service in 2008.

### Equipment to help you

Sometimes small items of equipment or minor adaptations to your home can make a big difference. A walking frame to help you get around different rooms, a chair for sitting in the shower or a handrail to help you get out of the bath can all make life a lot easier.

If you know what kind of equipment might help you, Age Concern North Tyneside can help you find out where to buy this or your GP or District Nurse may arrange this for you.



North Tyneside's Adaptations and Loan Equipment Service is dedicated to providing equipment and adaptations for all residents in the borough. A trained worker such as an Occupational Therapist will normally help you access this service through the NHS or Adult Social Care following an assessment.

#### **Adult Social Care**

If you are unsure what kind of support may help you at home, North Tyneside Council's Adult Social Care can help with advice or work with you to undertake a community care assessment.

A community care assessment is the first step in getting the right type of services and support for your social care needs.

You are entitled to a community care assessment if you have disability or any social care needs.

If you are a carer you can also have your needs assessed by asking for a Carers Assessment to be carried out.

#### **The assessment**

The assessment can be carried out by telephone or by visiting you in your home. The assessing worker will have an

opportunity to discuss all of the things you are able to manage for yourself, and also the things which you may be having difficulty with, for example getting dressed. It is often useful for you to have your carer or another relative or friend present, as the information you and your carers can give us is very valuable. The details collected during the assessment will be written onto an assessment form.

Sometimes it may be necessary for follow up visits and we may need to ask other specialist workers to help us in the assessment. For example, occupational therapists, district nurses, home helps, doctors, physiotherapists can provide additional information to ensure you get the very best support as soon as possible.

The types of services available include:

- Homecare.
- Daycare or other day opportunities to help you meet other people and keep active during the day.
- Respite (to give carers a break.)
- Short breaks to help you through a change in your usual support arrangements such as a temporary illness of your carer.

- Help for carers in their caring role.
- Meals in the community (meals on wheels).
- Specialist advice and support for people with hearing, sight or speech problems.
- Equipment, adaptations and Telecare alarm systems to help people live independently at home.
- Short-term rehabilitation to support you after a period of illness or stay in hospital.
- Alternative accommodation such as a sheltered housing scheme or Extra Care where you continue to be a tenant of your own property but can receive extra support such as an onsite warden and homecare.
- Residential and nursing care.

There is no charge for an assessment. However if you receive services then we may ask you to make a contribution towards the care you receive.

Any contribution we ask you to make will depend on your financial position.

We usually assess your financial situation when we assess your needs, and we will tell you if you need to pay towards the cost of your care. This is called a financial assessment, a process to work out how much someone needs to contribute towards the cost of their care.

#### **Assistive technology**

New developments in technology have huge potential to support people to live in their own homes, and to complement traditional care. It can provide more personal freedom and more time to concentrate on the human aspects of care and support. There is a range of equipment that might assist you to carry out everyday activities, enhance feelings of safety and provide less intrusive approaches to living independently such as:

- Ceiling pull cord
- Neck and wrist triggers
- Fall detector
- Bed occupancy detector
- Passive Infrared activity detector
- Pill Dispenser
- Enuresis sensor (maximise hygiene)
- Heat detector
- Smoke Detector
- Moisture & Flood detector
- Natural Gas detector
- Carbon Monoxide Detector
- Monitoring/Wandering Devices



Some of these items can be purchased independently or a Social Worker, Occupational Therapist or District Nurse can carry out an assessment to identify appropriate equipment that will benefit you, or the person you care for. The equipment supplied may be for a short term to monitor a persons needs, or longer term as part of a persons care package.

#### **Direct payments**

The Direct Payments scheme enables North Tyneside Adult Social Care to give you money directly to arrange community care services, rather than providing the services themselves. This enables you to choose the service you want for yourself.

The amount of money that you will be given will depend on an assessment of how much help or support you need. You can choose how to meet your assessed needs, who provides the help and who provides the equipment. You can choose Direct Payments on its own, or you can choose to have a mixture of Direct Payments and help from Social Services. For example, you can employ your own personal assistant for some of the time and still continue to attend a day centre if you wish.

#### **Looking at alternative arrangements**

There may come a time when you realise that you cannot manage living on your own anymore. This is a hard decision to make, so discuss the alternatives, such as sheltered housing, extra care or residential care with family and friends and contact North Tyneside Adult Social Care or Age Concern North Tyneside for advice. You won't be rushed into making a decision that you're not ready for.



# Organising your will and legal matters

*“ I wanted to get my affairs into order before I became too ill. I feel happier now because I know my wishes will be carried out and, that when I die, those closest to me will benefit from my will. ”*



## Awareness

Writing a will helps save your family from worry and upset in the future and means your wishes will be met. If you have an illness that may lead you to be mentally incapacitated in the future and views about the kind of treatment you receive and for how long, it makes sense to think about writing an advance statement or directive.



## Action

Contact one of the organisations listed to get more information on writing a will or a living will. Age Concern North Tyneside has free fact sheets that can help you explore the options. A solicitor does not need to be involved in writing a directive, but you may want to discuss your wishes with your family and your GP.



## Prevention

Settling your legal matters in advance will give you peace of mind and will also make things a lot easier and less stressful for your family, if you become ill or when you die.

### WEBLINKS

[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk) • [www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org)  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) • [www.guardianship.gov.uk](http://www.guardianship.gov.uk)

### EMAIL

Age Concern North Tyneside: [office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org](mailto:office@ageconcernnorthtyne.org)



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 2808484  
For factsheets call Age Concern England  
Tel: 0800 00 99 66
- Citizens Advice Bureau  
Tel: 0870 1264747
- Law Society  
Tel: 020 7242 1222
- NHS Organ Donor Line  
Tel: 0845 60 60 400  
lines open 7am-11pm  
(except Christmas Day and New Years Day)
- Public Guardianship Office  
Tel: 0845 330 2900

- Make sure that your wishes are known
- A will means that your wishes will be followed
- Drawing up a will doesn't have to cost a lot
- Get financial help for legal matters
- A living will states your wishes for future treatment
- Organising your legal matters will help your family

## Making your wishes known

### Why make a will?

Even if you feel you do not have much to leave, it is important that what you do have is left to those you care about. If you do not make a will, this means you die 'intestate'. Your spouse will be the main beneficiary unless stated otherwise. If you are not married to your partner they will not automatically be a beneficiary, so make arrangements in advance. This process is lengthy so organise things in advance. You should consider including Power of Attorney in your will.

### Other legal matters

Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for advice. Some solicitors may have funding schemes such as 'Legal Help'. Remember to check what fees may apply in advance.

### Making your wishes known

Age Concern North Tyneside provides a document that gives details on your wishes for funeral arrangements. It has spaces where you can fill in information so your family and friends understand your wishes after your death. This document should be given to a trusted family member for safe keeping. It cannot be used as a will.

Ask for the form headed 'to my family, friends and executors....'

### Living Will

A living will, also known as an "advance directive" is a document which usually takes the form of a written statement setting out what types of medical treatment the maker of the will does, or does not want in specific circumstances should he be incapable of giving or refusing consent. It must be signed whilst the maker is mentally competent.

### Power of Attorney

Remember to think about how your financial matters will be handled after your death and consider giving power of attorney to one of your family members to make sure that your money is distributed as you would wish.

### Lasting Power of Attorney

There may come a time when, because you are incapable of managing your property and financial affairs or personal welfare, you will need someone to do this for you. You can formally appoint a friend, relative or professional to hold a lasting power of attorney (LPA) that will allow them to act on your behalf.

A LPA can be drawn up at any time while you have capacity, but has no legal standing until it is registered with the Office of the Public Guardian.

A registered LPA can be used at any time, whether you have the mental ability to act for yourself or not. You can create two types of LPA: Property and Affairs LPA and a Personal Welfare LPA.

### Partnership Rights

If you and your partner are not married you should seek advice because different rules apply around:

- Bereavement and registration of death.
- Inheritance.
- 'Next of kin' status and incapacity.
- Pension provision.
- Tenancy.
- Wills and intestacy (if you die without leaving a will).

# Protecting older people from abuse

“ I knew that the way he was treating me wasn't right, but I didn't know who to turn to. Luckily, another carer realised I wasn't quite my usual self and encouraged me to talk. ”



## Awareness

Abuse of older people has been called a 'hidden and often ignored problem in society'. It can be defined as a single or repeated action against an older person. The Government guidance "No Secrets" states that "there can be no secrets and no hiding place when it comes to exposing the abuse of vulnerable adults."



## Action

Explain your concerns and that action needs to be taken. Never feel embarrassed about highlighting abuse. Don't be afraid to complain or make a fuss if something doesn't feel right. If it's a care home or care agency get a copy of their complaints policy, find out who the registered manager is and tell them what's wrong. If the abuse involves physical or sexual assault, racial harassment or theft you should involve the Police. If you are worried about contacting the Police you can always contact Age Concern North Tyneside or Adult Social Care. In an emergency dial 999.



## Talk to

Somebody you trust like your doctor, a relative friend or carer, or an organisation like Age Concern North Tyneside. Call the Police, Adult Social Care, or Action on Elder Abuse. All of these people will make sure somebody talks to you or comes to see you promptly.



## Prevention

The earlier abuse is spotted, the less long-term harm can be carried out. Always trust your instincts if you feel someone is not being treated in the way they should be.



## Contacts

- Action on Elder Abuse  
Tel: 0808 808 8141  
(Mon-Fri, 10am-4.30pm)
- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- Counsel and Care Advice line  
Tel: 0845 300 7585  
(10.30am-4pm)
- Carers National Association CarersLine  
Tel: 080 8808 777  
(Mon-Fri, 10am-12pm, 2-4pm)
- North Tyneside Adult Services First Call Team  
Tel: 0191 200 6050
- North Tyneside Adult Protection Team  
Tel: 0191 200 1777 or 0191 2001761
- The Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Tel: 0191 2333300
- North Tyneside Emergency Duty Team (Out-of-Office Hours)  
Tel: 0191 2006800

- Abuse of older people has been called a 'hidden and often ignored problem in society'
- Abuse isn't common and you can do a great deal to keep safe
- Both older men and women can be at risk of being abused
- Abuse can happen anywhere
- The abuser is often well known to the person being abused

## Why abuse occurs

The abuser is often well known to the older person. The strain of caring for someone, especially on a long-term basis, can lead people to act in ways that they shouldn't, leading to a one-off or occasional act, for example the result of frustration. Or there are systematic attacks, deliberate acts of intent to harm. These may be triggered by the break down of the relationship or the carer's inability to provide the level of care needed. In nursing homes or residential care, abuse can occur when staff are inadequately trained or supervised and have little management support or guidance.

Older people can also be targeted by bogus callers and rogue traders. Always ask for an identity card and don't be afraid to keep any caller outside of your home whilst you check they are genuine, by contacting the organisation using a number from the phone book. ID cards can be fake and may not give you genuine phone number.

### Forms of abuse include:

- Physical abuse - causing physical harm either deliberately or by rough or thoughtless behaviour.
- Psychological or emotional abuse - behaviour that makes you feel anxious, frightened or intimidated including verbal abuse, demeaning, threatening, or intimidating language.

- Financial abuse - includes theft, fraud or exploitation. It may be someone using or putting pressure on you to use your money in a way that you don't want or isn't in your best interests.
- Neglect - including ignoring or failing to meet your medical or physical care needs, or the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Sexual abuse - involves someone making you do something you don't want to, didn't or couldn't consent to.
- Discriminatory - being treated less favourably because of your colour, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, status etc.

### What to do about it

Abuse stays hidden because people are afraid to speak out. But abuse has a profound effect on the quality of life of an older person and their rights need to be recognised.

### Carers perspectives

If you feel someone is suffering in some way, try to talk to them alone. It may take a few attempts to find out if there is a problem. Physical abuse may be more easily identifiable than psychological abuse or neglect, but trust your instincts. If you are a staff member or volunteer, talk to your line manager, who can pass the information onto the appropriate person.

# Exercising your mind & body

“ I thought I was too old to start exercising, but now my day doesn't feel right if I haven't been out for a good walk. I feel fitter, have more energy and have a good old chat with my friends along the way. It's given me the confidence to try other new things, too. ”



## Awareness

Growing older doesn't have to mean you become less able. The more aware you are of keeping physically and mentally active, the more you can reduce the risk of health problems. It's never too late! Research has shown that people over the age of 75 years who exercised gently for 12 weeks, increased the strength of their thigh muscles by about 25%.



## Action

Find a form of exercise that suits you. If you don't want to exercise as part of a group, think about walking or swimming. Taking up activities that keep you mentally stimulated, such as chess or bingo, will not only keep your brain active, but will help you to meet new friends.



## Talk to

Discuss any health concerns with your GP, who will be able to assess you and advise you. If you are concerned about yourself or someone else who has memory problems, talk to the Alzheimer's Society who can offer advice and support. Age Concern North Tyneside or the Alzheimer's Society may also be able to offer a day place at one of their centres or at various events and activities in the community.



## Prevention

Enjoying mental and physical activities can help reduce the risk of many conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease, osteoporosis and depression, as well as helping you to get out and about and make new friends.

WEBLINKS

[www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org) • [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) • [www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)

EMAIL

[alzntbranch@btconnect.com](mailto:alzntbranch@btconnect.com)



## Contacts

- Age Concern North Tyneside  
Tel: 0191 280 8484
- Alzheimer's Society  
Tel: 0191 257 1245
- North Tyneside Carers Centre  
Tel: 200 1111
- North Tyneside Adult Learning Alliance  
Tel: 0191 200 1627/28
- Libraries and on-line learning  
Tel: 0191 200 5424
- North Tyneside Council Customer Services  
Tel: 0845 2000 101

- You are never too old to start something new, make the most of growing older!
- Ageing doesn't have to mean a decline in mental health
- Physical activity gives you more energy and improves your mental health
- Take steps to help prevent depression

## Keeping yourself healthy and happy

### Coping with life changes

There are many life changes that can occur as we get older. Some of these changes can lead to anxiety, loss of confidence, depression and dementia.

A loss of health or mobility may mean getting out less or becoming more dependent on others. There are steps you can take to help cope with these life changes. Make sure you have other activities and hobbies in place when you retire, so that you are not suddenly faced with long, empty days. Use the support of family, friends and local services if you are looking after a sick partner or are bereaved you will appreciate and need the support network.

### The benefits of physical activity

Keeping physically active has a huge number of benefits; it helps to reduce the risk of conditions such as diabetes, heart disease and strokes; it strengthens your muscles, aids mobility; encourages a healthy appetite, regular bowel movements and a good sleeping routine. It can reduce the risk of falls, osteoporosis, stress and depression. It stimulates the brain, keeping brain cells on the alert.

Physical activity doesn't mean having to join a gym. You could take up a dance class, walk to the shops instead of taking the bus, or tackle the garden, all of which will be keeping your muscles toned and your joints supple. Even if you are not able to be active when standing up, there are lots of seated exercises you can do.

### Keeping mentally stimulated

We all forget things sometimes but the more you use your brain, the more mentally active you'll remain.

Many activities help keep your brain mentally agile; crossword puzzles, chess, bingo, learning

a language or taking a cookery course. It is also possible to train your memory to some degree, for instance by making lists, or using certain 'trigger' words to jog your memory. Just turning up at one of North Tyneside's community centres and meeting new people may be all the mental stimulation you need.

Age Concern North Tyneside can offer advice and programmes that may be of interest to you. North Tyneside Adult Learning Alliance also runs a full range of classes.

### Recognising there's a problem

If you have concerns about your physical or mental health, get the support of family, friends and your GP. The sooner you talk about any concerns, the more quickly you can be diagnosed and treated, if necessary, before the problem gets worse.

If you are becoming more confused, forgetful or thinking things through is becoming more difficult, you may have dementia. Dementia is a common concern for many of us as we grow older. Symptoms, such as forgetfulness, confusion, and difficulties with every day tasks may not be recognised as dementia at first, but can gradually worsen. Getting an early diagnosis can help you to stay well for longer.

If you feel you've lost confidence, haven't got the energy to go out, feel irritable, are sleeping badly, drinking more alcohol, and take little care over your appearance, you may be suffering from depression. There are many factors that can lead to depression, such as bereavement, loneliness and ill health. Symptoms may include a loss of appetite, insomnia, weight loss, lack of motivation and little energy. It's normal to feel one or two of these at any time, but if you are affected by a combination of them, talk to your GP about diagnosis and treatment.

# Useful contacts

## BEREAVEMENT

**Age Concern North Tyneside**  
Tel: 0191 280 8484

**Cruse Bereavement Care**  
Tel: 0870 167 1677  
[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

**Samaritans**  
Tel: 08457 90 90 90 or 0191 232 7272  
[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

## CARERS & CARING

**Carers' Line**  
Tel: 0808 808 7777  
[www.carersonline.org.uk](http://www.carersonline.org.uk)

**Saneline**  
Tel: 0845 767 8000

**SeniorLine**  
Tel: 0808 800 6565

**North Tyneside Carers Centre**  
Tel: 0191 200 1111  
[www.carers.org/ntyneside](http://www.carers.org/ntyneside)

**Commission for Social Care Inspection**  
Tel: 0845 015 0120

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

**Department for Work and Pension  
The Pension Service**  
Tel: 0845 60 60 265  
[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)  
[www.thepensionservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Age Concern England**  
Free helpline Tel: 0800 00 99 66  
[www.ageconcern.org.uk](http://www.ageconcern.org.uk)

**Age Concern North Tyneside**  
Tel: 0191 280 8484  
[www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org](http://www.ageconcernnorthtyne.org)

**North Tyneside Council Customer Services**  
Tel: 0845 2000 101  
[www.northtyneside.gov.uk](http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk)

**FirstStop**  
For advice, independent information and advice about all aspects of care, housing and finance for older people.  
[www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk](http://www.firststopcareadvice.org.uk)

**Patient Advice and Liaison Service**  
North of Tyne PALS Tel: 0800 0320202

**LINKs - Local Involvement Networks**  
Tel: 0191 200 1429

**Citizens Advice Bureau**  
Tel: 0870 126 4747  
[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

## HEALTH & WELL-BEING

**Arthritis Care**  
Tel: 0808 800 4050  
[www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk)

**Continence Foundation**  
Tel: 0845 345 0165  
[www.continence-foundation.org.uk](http://www.continence-foundation.org.uk)

**Disabled Living Foundation**  
Tel: 0845 130 9177  
[www.dlf.org.uk](http://www.dlf.org.uk)

**Help the Aged**  
[www.helptheaged.org.uk](http://www.helptheaged.org.uk)

**NHS Direct**  
Tel: 0845 4647  
[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

**The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists**  
Tel: 0845 450 3720  
[www.feetforlife.org](http://www.feetforlife.org)

**Diabetes UK Helpline**  
Tel: 0845 120 296  
[www.diabetes.org.uk](http://www.diabetes.org.uk)

**Alcoholics Anonymous**  
Tel: 0845 76 97 555 (24hour Helpline)  
[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

**Northern Doctors Urgent Care**  
if you need to see a doctor in the evening or over the weekend.  
Tel: 0845 60 80 320

## LEARNING

**Basic Skills Agency**  
Tel: 0800 700 987 (freephone)

**LearnDirect**  
Tel: 0800 100 900  
[www.learnirect.co.uk](http://www.learnirect.co.uk)

**Adult Learning Alliance**  
Tel: 0191 200 1627/28

## LEGAL MATTERS/WILLS

**Law Society**  
Tel: 020 7242 1222  
[www.lawsociety.org.uk](http://www.lawsociety.org.uk)

**Age Concern England**  
Free helpline Tel: 800 00 99 66

## MENTAL HEALTH

**Mental Health Matters**  
Tel: 0800 045 7110

**MIND**  
Tel: 0845 760 163  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**The Alzheimer's Society  
North Tyneside Branch**  
Tel: 0191 257 1245  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

## OLDER SURFERS

**Government website with information for Over 50s**  
[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

**Websites aimed at older surfers**  
[www.silversurfers.net](http://www.silversurfers.net)  
[www.age-net.co.uk](http://www.age-net.co.uk)  
[www.seniority.co.uk](http://www.seniority.co.uk)

## SEXUAL MATTERS

**Relate**  
Tel: 0845 130 40 10  
[www.relate.org.uk](http://www.relate.org.uk)

## WORKING

[www.agepositive.gov.uk](http://www.agepositive.gov.uk)  
[www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk](http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk)

**The Pensions Advisory Service**  
Tel: 0845 601 2923  
[www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk](http://www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk)

**Volunteer websites**  
[www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk)  
[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)  
[www.reach-online.org.uk](http://www.reach-online.org.uk)

## YOUR HOME & SAFETY

**Disabled Living Foundation**  
Tel: 0845 130 9177

**Northumbria Police Crime Prevention**  
Tel: 01661 863133

**Neighbourhood Policing Team**  
Tel: 03456 043 043 (for non-emergencies)

**North Tyneside Homes**  
Tel: 0845 2000 101