



Living Well with Visual Impairment - your Guide to Support and Resources

Introduction

Welcome to our guide on living well with visual impairment. Vision loss can present unique challenges, but with the right support and strategies you can maintain your independence and quality of life. This leaflet provides essential information and resources available through our GP surgery and beyond.

Understanding Visual Impairment

○ What is Visual Impairment?

Visual impairment refers to a significant reduction in vision that cannot be fully corrected with standard glasses, contact lenses, or medical intervention.

○ Common Causes

- Age-related macular degeneration.
- Glaucoma.
- Diabetic retinopathy.
- Cataracts.
- Retinitis pigmentosa.

Practical Tips for Daily Living - Home Adaptations

- Improve lighting in your home.
- Use high-contrast colours for easier navigation.
- Label items with large print or tactile markers.

Practical Tips – Assistive Devices

- Magnifiers and screen readers.
- Talking clocks and watches.
- Voice-activated assistants.

Practical Tips – Technology

- Utilize accessibility features on smartphones and computers.
- Explore apps designed for visually impaired individuals.

Services Available within Surgery

- **Referral to a Hospital Specialist** – GP's can refer you to appropriate specialists and rehabilitation services tailored to your needs (if needed). A GP appointment will be needed to discuss to proceed.
- **Support** – our Social Prescriber can provide emotional support to help you adjust to any vision changes.

Community and Support

- **Support Groups** – join local or online support groups to connect with others who have similar experiences.
- **Rehabilitation Services** - access training for orientation and mobility, daily living skills, and adaptive technology.

- **Educational Resources** - RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People) / Guide Dogs for the Blind Association / Local council services for the visually impaired

Maintaining your Health and Well-Being

- **Regular Check-Ups** - schedule health check-ups as requested by the GP to monitor your overall well-being.
- **Mental Health Support** – book a GP appointment if you experience anxiety, depression, or stress related to vision loss.
- **Stay Active** - engage in physical activities suited to your abilities to maintain fitness and mental health.
- **Regular eye exams** - are crucial for detecting changes in vision and managing eye health.

Cedars Medical Centre is committed to supporting individuals to live with visual impairment and to provide appropriate support and guidance to ensure individuals have a fulfilling life throughout their visual journey.

Please contact surgery if you need any additional support or advice / book an appointment.

CEDARS MEDICAL CENTRE

Sandbach Road South, Alsager, ST7 2LU

Tel: 01270 443080

E-mail: contactcedars@nhs.net

Useful Contact Information

Adult Social Services - if a patient is finding it difficult to cope with everyday living tasks due to: illness / a disability / frailty / a fall or an accident / recovering from an operation / a major change in their life / a crisis / a health condition - 0300 123 5010

Age UK (Cheshire East) - support services for individuals living with dementia / help at home - cleaning - shopping, preparing light lunches / benefit support - housing queries - disputes with companies, activities and events etc - 01625 612958

Alsager Community Support - trained volunteers offer support and information about local and wider services / signpost to appropriate services / support in making a phone call or support in completing forms for applying for benefits / free benefit checks / where to donate books, clothes / small jobs around the house / travel to local medical appointments etc - 01270 876605

Books on Wheels - deliver library books / talking books to housebound and isolated residents.
Mobile libraries in Cheshire East operate on a 3 week cycle. Please contact Alsager Library - 01270 375325

Cheshire East Council (visual Impairment, sight loss and blindness). If your vision is starting to impact your everyday life and is not fully corrected by glasses or contact lenses, you can talk to them about what support may be of help. This could be - advice, information on how to stay safe at home / getting out and about and staying active / linking you to other sources of support - 0300 123 5010 - option 2

Cheshire East Council (Careline 365 Personal Alarms). At Careline, their mission is to help as many people as possible to live a safe and enjoyable life. They support thousands of elderly, disabled and vulnerable people in the comfort of their own homes with Careline Alarm.

The Alarm comes in two parts, the alarm unit and the red button pendant which can be worn either around the neck or the wrist. They also offer a Fall Detector pendant.

The Fall Detector is ideal for those who want all the benefits of a Careline alarm with an additional feature which automatically detects a fall and generates a call to their Care Team without pressing the button - 0800 101 3333 (there will be charge for this service)

Citizens Advice - Cheshire East - Crewe - 0800 144 8848 / Cheshire East - Nantwich - 03444 111 444 Cheshire North - Macclesfield - 01625 708608. They offer advice on: benefits / work / debt and money / consumer / housing / family / law and courts / immigration / health

East Cheshire Eye Society (local sight loss organisation). Is an independent charity. Their purpose is to enable people affected by sight loss to lead fulfilling lives at work, at home and in the community - 01625 422 602

Cheshire East Council (Assistive Technology). Assistive Technology (also sometimes referred to as Telecare) is a range of electronic gadgets that can help you to live independently in your own home. This includes things such as: sensors/detectors that link to a monitoring centre. For example; a falls detector, pendant alarm, smoke, low temperature and property exit sensors / devices which use GPS to raise alerts to a carer or monitoring centres / triggers/sensors that can support a person or their carer in and around the home. For example; pendant buttons, door contacts or motion sensors linked to a pager. The service includes support from a response centre and a falls pick up service. 0800 130 0011 (there will be charge for this service)

Sight Loss information line (Cheshire) - a national lottery funded project. The aim is to provide comprehensive assistance and guidance for those living with sight loss, their families and carers - 01244 478910

Talking Newspapers for the Blind - Local news for people with visual impairment or disability. Free - 01625 435 283

Vision Support - the sight loss information line is designated to provide assistance and guidance to those living with sight loss and their families. They will be able to sign post to services and support within your local areas. They can also make referrals on your behalf with appropriate permission. Please call 01244 478910 (9-5pm Monday to Thursday or 9-4.30pm on a Friday)

Visual Impairment Form

Cedars Medical Centre keeps a register of patients who are visually impaired – if you would like to be registered, please complete and return this form back to our Reception Team.

Patient Details

I would like to have it recorded on my medical records that I am visually impaired									
First name(s):							Surname:		
Title:	Mr		Mrs		Ms		Miss		Date of Birth:
Address:							Postcode:		
Home telephone:									
Mobile number:									
E-mail									
When were you diagnosed / by whom / date. Please list below your eye medical condition.									
Please state below what additional support (if any) or access requirements are needed when visiting the surgery.									
I hereby confirm the information I have provided is true and accurate									
Signed							Dated:		

