

Community Careline Booklet



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Welcome

To North Hertfordshire District Council Community Careline

This booklet contains information about our Careline service. Should you have any further questions about the service please do not hesitate to contact the Careline office by any of the options listed on page 5. The administration office is open Monday to Friday 08.30 – 16.30.

If it is an urgent problem that cannot wait either press your pendant or call the Careline centre, which is open 24hrs a day, on **01462 420600.**

About Careline

Community Careline enables us to help people live securely and independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Peace of mind is only the press of a button away.

First established in 1982 the service has built up a high reputation and other local authorities and housing associations outside North Hertfordshire now link into it.

The fully trained and dedicated staff are on hand 24 hours a day and will respond to all calls in a prompt, caring and appropriate manner.

The Community Careline is committed to the Council's Vision in enhancing the quality of life in North Hertfordshire.



How To Contact Careline



By phone

01462 454609 – Community Alarms office
24hr **01462 420600** – Main Careline office



By E-mail

careline@north-herts.gov.uk



By Fax

01462 343000



By Letter

55 Harkness Court
Franklin Gardens
Hitchin
Herts
SG4 0BS



How will my enquiry be dealt with?

1

When you contact the Community Alarms office, a member of staff will explain how the system works and advise you of the options available, cost and requirements e.g. contacts.

2

We will then send you or the client some information through the post or arrange a demonstration in the client's home.

It may be advisable for the client to have a family member or friend there.

3

The Community Alarms Officer will answer any questions you may have about the service.

Some people decide on the day whether or not they wish to have the alarm installed; if this is the case the Officer can set the alarm up there and then.

Other people may wish to take time to think it over.

4

We aim to have the alarm set up within 7 working days of the client deciding to have an alarm.

In some emergency cases, such as a discharge from hospital, we will try to arrange installation within a couple of days.

Frequently Asked Questions About Careline

How soon can I have the alarm fitted?

We aim to install as soon as possible after the request has been made. Most alarms can be installed within a week.

Can anyone have an alarm fitted?

Yes. We fit for Private, NHH, Howard Cottage etc.

What do I need for the alarm to be fitted?

A telephone socket and an electric socket on the same wall and 2 key holders

How does it work?

After the alarm is plugged into the telephone socket and electric socket you will be issued with a pendant which can be worn around your neck or on a wrist strap. If help is needed press the button and the Careline will answer your call. The operator will then decide whom to call.

What is the cost?

This varies according to people's circumstances.

Will my alarm work in the garden?

In most gardens but the installer will check the range for you.

Will the alarm work in a power cut?

Yes. The alarm has a back-up battery and will still work for up to 2 days without power.

Do I need to do anything once the alarm has been installed?

Yes. Press the pendant once a month and tell the operator you are testing. Also inform them of any changes in your details.

What if I press the pendant by mistake?

Don't worry as long as you tell the operator that you are ok and pressed it by mistake.

What if the alarm goes wrong?

Inform the Careline. An engineer will be called out and they will make contact with you within 24 hours.

What if the Careline cannot hear me?

In most areas of the house the Careline will hear you but if not they will phone you first before calling one of your contacts.

Community Careline Guidance Notes

Welcome to North Hertfordshire Community Careline. These guidance notes are designed to help you achieve the maximum benefit from the service.

1. The unit should remain connected at all times even if you are going to be away from home.
2. If you do need to turn the electricity off for any reason please remove the telephone socket as well.
3. Let us know if you are going to be away from home, on holiday or in hospital.
4. Please contact us again when you return, pressing the pendant button to ensure the unit is working properly.
5. It is important that you advise us if your circumstances change:
 - If you change your doctor
 - If a key holder or relative changes their telephone number
 - If your key holders change
 - If there is any change to your medical condition
6. For your protection all calls received at the Careline Centre are recorded and the records maintained for 1 year.

7. **PLEASE TEST YOUR PENDANT EVERY MONTH**, to ensure that, should you need to use it in an emergency that the battery is working correctly – failure to test could result in the pendant not working correctly when needed.

8. **The equipment remains the property of North Hertfordshire District Council When it is no longer required, it MUST be returned to Careline.** This can be done by taking the alarm & pendant to your nearest NHDC office. If the equipment is purchased and is no longer required, Please contact the Careline so the unit can be De-programmed. Please telephone the Community Alarms Officer on 01462 454609 to inform us if this has been done.

9. If you wish to nominate family, friend or an attorney to pay on your behalf or look after your interests, (in relation to your alarm or payments of the alarm service), please call the community alarms officer who will be happy to advise of how we can accommodate.

10. Careline has a Health and Safety policy. If you have any concerns please contact the Careline Manager on 05601 279628 or out of office hours the main Careline number 01462 420600.

The Community Careline Service

The Community Careline Service provides the following benefits to clients in North Hertfordshire:

- A 24 hour, 365 day Careline service, responding to all calls from clients in a prompt and appropriate manner. If calls are made to the service in an emergency situation, the operator may:
 - Call an appropriate key holder to effect access to your home
 - Call the Fire, Police or Ambulance service
 - Call a doctor
- In non urgent situations we may be able to liaise with other agencies on your behalf, i.e. Social Services, Home care, Meals on Wheels, or if known, advise you of an alternative number/contact.
- Provision of a fully maintained community alarm unit and pendant, which links the client to the Careline Centre by connection through the clients telephone.
- Response within 24 hours in the event of a fault developing with the community alarm equipment

Key holder information and what it means.

- It is advisable that you have at least 2 people who are willing to hold keys to your home and attend in an emergency if necessary. The more key holders you have the better it is.
- Your key holders should live and/or work within 20 minutes of your home to enable us to get help to you quickly.
- Your chosen key holders must be willing to give you their home address and any phone numbers so Careline can contact them (home, work, mobile etc). You will need these details with you when someone comes to talk to you about the alarm.
- Your key holders must hold a key, know where one is hidden or hold the number to a key safe.
- We appreciate key holders cannot be available 24hrs a day 7 days a week. All we ask is that they try to attend in an emergency if called upon.
- If a key holder is needed they will receive a phone call from the Careline, an operator will identify themselves by giving their name and explaining the problem that has arisen.
- Reasons for attending:-
 - One of the statutory services needs to be called and access to your property is needed.

Fallback Response Service

The Careline provides a Fallback Response service to attend no reply calls. In the case where none of the client's local responders can be contacted a member of Arena Security will be called out to assess the situation and report back to the Careline who will act accordingly.

All Arena Security staff have been checked by the Criminal Records Bureau and are SIA members.



For the purpose of this service all Careline clients are required to have a keysafe installed in order that the team can gain access to the property should there be no reply at the door.

The keysafe code is kept on the client record and will only be issued to the team and/or the Statutory Services.

For reasons of security we cannot divulge the keysafe code to any other responders.

The charge for the Fallback Response service is included in the quarterly Careline fee.

- If we have received a no reply call; meaning the alarm has been activated but no one has answered, this could indicate that you need help or that the alarm was pressed by mistake and you did not respond to our enquiry of your wellbeing.
- If you are on the floor we prefer your responder not to pick you up. This is to prevent further injury.
- Where necessary Careline will call on the ambulance. If ambulance control request contact with on scene responders we may refer them to you directly.
- You or your responders should inform us of any changes to contact details. If a responder moves, changes phone numbers (including mobile) or is going on holiday please let us know.
- It is advisable to have an alternative contact should one of your responders go on holiday. The Careline can be informed of this at anytime.
- If you have any problems please call the Community Alarms Officer on 01462 454609.

Your guide to our complaint procedure

STAGE 1: COMPLAINT

You can make a complaint in person, by phone, via our website, www.north-herts.gov.uk email, letter or fax. Once received, your complaint is logged for action by the Customer Service Centre and then forwarded to the service that you have an issue with.

We will acknowledge your complaint within 4 working days and pass the complaint for investigation by the manager of the service concerned. We aim to get a full response to you within 4 to 10 working days.

Are you satisfied?

Yes -
no further
action

No

STAGE 2: APPEAL

If you are not satisfied with our response, we have an appeal process within 14 days of our initial response to you. Contact the Customer Service Centre stating why you are not satisfied with the response. The Head of Service concerned will look at your issue again. You may also ask your councillor for advice and support.

Are you satisfied?

Yes -
no further
action

No

STAGE 3: LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

The council's decision at appeal is final. However if you are still unhappy, you now have the right to appeal via the Local Government Ombudsman.

Website: www.lgo.org.uk • Telephone: 0207 217 4620
Email: london@lgo.org.uk



Information and actions we will cover during the installation.

- How the service we provide operates and the types of calls that are dealt with.
- The reasons for calls and action taken for non emergency and emergency including no reply calls.
- How the unit is connected to your telephone line and plug socket (where applicable).
- The different choices you have to wear your pendant.
- Press the button to get help 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- The pendant should be worn around the home and garden.
- Take the pendant off at night but put it back on if getting up during the night.
- The pendant is water proof – cord may get wet – can give good clean.
- The role of the key holder – leaflet enclosed to give to each key holder. Your key holders must be in agreement and fully understand their role.
- The Community Alarms Officer will make a live test call to show you how it works.

- The cost of the alarm will be confirmed to make sure you are happy – any doubts please talk to family/contact.
- VAT charges will be explained.
- Payment methods will be discussed – no payment can be made by cash.
- You can set payment by direct debit
- The Community Alarms Officer will go through all the points of the agreement with you including the termination process for both sides and will explain the cooling off period.
- You will be asked if you would like a demonstration of how the alarm works and explained why your particular alarm has been chosen.
- The Community Lifelines Officer will connect the alarm and programme it if necessary.
- All calls to the Careline are recorded.
- We will test the alarm together explaining the tones (if applicable) and wait for the Careline to talk to you.
- The alarm only has one way speech – meaning whilst the operator is talking to you they will not hear what you are saying and vice versa.
- If you have problems in hearing the operator please ask them to turn up the volume.

- We shall tell the operator this is the first test call on a new installation. They should automatically make an introduction speech. If not we shall ask them to.
- Speak and say goodbye – make sure you are not frightened to talk to the operator.
- The operator will switch off the call – you do not need to do anything.
- We shall follow your expressed wishes unless it is something that jeopardises your health and safety.
- Another test call can be made if required to ensure you are happy with your unit. We shall explain the importance of test calls, what will happen if it is not done monthly and ask you to make a note on your calendar.
- We will check the size of your house and garden and do a test call from the furthest point if necessary.
- The alarm will work for up to 48 hours in a power cut but will not work if the phone line is disconnected or faulty. Please call us if you have any queries.
- We shall complete the paperwork explaining everything as we go along.
- If you have any questions or worries please ask the Community Alarms Officer before leaving.



Telecare

Telecare simply means getting help from people at a distance.

Telecare sensors can be programmed through the existing lifeline equipment and if activated will make a call automatically to the Careline. The operators will speak to the person who has set off the alarm to offer support or arrange other services that can help.

Telecare sensors work through the same system to automatically detect problems like overflowing basins, gas escapes, smoke, falls or mobility. They can send an alert through to someone who can help.

Telecare can be a great reassurance both to people who are finding it harder to manage at home and to their relatives. It has been shown to help people manage longer in their homes when they might otherwise have needed to move into residential care. Telecare can reassure carers that the person they care for is safe so they can focus on other activities, whether leisure or work.

Telecare can be provided free as a result of a social care assessment, to request an assessment contact Adult Care Services (on 0300 123 4042). Telecare can also be provided free as a result of a mental health assessment which your GP can arrange.

If you do not have a connection to the Careline service you will need to pay for basic connection and monitoring. These are covered by a weekly charge of a few pounds. Some people can get this cost met by 'Supporting People', the alarm service will help you find out if this applies. People who do not have substantial or critical risks may not be eligible for free Telecare but they will be able to purchase it directly from NHDC Careline.

As an alternative to systems which link to the Careline Service there are systems which will alert a carer in the same house.

The Telecare equipment will remain the property of NHDC Careline and when the equipment is no longer needed please call 01462 454609 to arrange the return.



Home Unit



A guide to your Careline Medical Alert Card and Keyfinder Key Fob

NHDC Medical Alert Card

In an emergency situation, you may not be able to speak and give vital information to help alert others concerning your health. Medical providers must sometimes treat accident victims without having any basic medical information about the individual or any way to contact someone who could provide crucial information.

An NHDC Medical Alert Card will prove to be invaluable in providing treatment by attending medics or other medical personnel. Information about yourself is recorded on our secure emergency control system: A.L.E.X.

Medical personnel can contact NHDC Careline to ascertain medical information and operators can contact next of kin to inform them of your condition and whereabouts.

NHDC Keyfinder

NHDC Keyfinder offers peace of mind and security for your keys.

Everyone has a set of keys and losing your keys can be very stressful. Also changing locks and replacing keys is so time consuming and can be very expensive.

NHDC Keyfinder offers a simple but effective way of relocating you to your lost keys without disclosure of your confidential personal or business information.

Once you have received your NHDC Keyfinder key rings, and have been registered on A.L.E.X with its unique id number, your keys are safe.

Should someone find your keys they can call Careline to report their location. We then call you with the finder's details to discuss the most convenient method for collection of your keys. This is a simple solution and we do not disclose your personal or business contact information.

To set-up your details please contact NHDC Careline on 01462 454609 and a member of our team will be happy to assist you.

**In a medical emergency please
phone UK 01462 420600
REVERSE CHARGE CALLS ACCEPTED**

Important

**In an emergency you can phone our
Emergency Information Centre on
the above number 24-hours-a-day to
obtain further personal and medical
data on our member**

Lone person alarm



The Lone person alarm is a mobile phone which can be used to safe guard lone persons 24 Hours a day, 365 days a year.

It works by GPS tracking and can tell where the service user is at any given time.
(within 4 meters)

It has an **SOS button** on each side of the phone in case of an emergency.

Battery life – needs charging every couple of days

Examples of telecare equipment

Gas Detector, fitted in the kitchen to detect if gas is left on.
This product is hard wired to electric



Carbon Monoxide Detector. Fitted near to boiler and detects Carbon Monoxide leakage. Battery life is 2 years. This will be serviced at the time of battery usage



Flood Detector, Fitted in the Bathroom. This device has 3 prongs at the back. When 2 are in contact with water it will send a call to the Control centre. Battery life 5 years



PIR- Movement sensor.
This product sensors movement in case of burglary or inactivity in the case of non movement of a client. Battery life 18 months



Fall Detector, This product is worn by the client and if a fall occurs it will sense this and make a call to control centre. This helps if a person has fallen and has passed out. Battery life is 6 months



Vat Exemption Form

North Hertfordshire District Council must charge you VAT on the supply of your Community Alarm Service. However some people are eligible for VAT Relief and as such do not have to pay the VAT. If you are chronically sick or disabled you may apply to be exempt from the VAT charges if any of the following apply:

Criteria (please tick where relevant)

You have a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect upon your ability to carry out everyday activities.
(please give a full and specific description of your condition in the box below)

You have a condition which the medical profession treats as a chronic sickness such as diabetes
(please give a full and specific description of your condition in the box below)

You are terminally ill.

Additional Details:

Declaration of eligibility for exemption from VAT

I (Full name)

Of (Full address)

Declare that I am an eligible person under paragraph 1 of VAT leaflet 701/7 and that I am receiving a Community Careline Service from North Hertfordshire District Council, Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth GC, SG6 3JF

Signature

Date

(If you are in any doubt about whether you are eligible, you can obtain further advice from the National advice service on 0845 010 9000 before signing the declaration.

Please be aware that it is an offence to make a false statement.)

Consultation With Service Users

Careline will be setting up a consultation group which will enable service users to give input on the services provided by the Careline.

We would like to hear your views on how we can improve the service. This will be done in the form of a questionnaire, which will be sent out on a regular basis. These questionnaire's will be sent out to a percentage of people who wish to be part of the group. Please feel free to put any positive or negative comments, so we can continue to improve our Careline service

Minimum Length Of Service

A cooling off period of 30 days is defined as a period of time the client is allowed after signing the agreement to cancel without incurring a financial penalty.

Staff Boundaries

The Careline is there for emergencies (i.e. Medical, Unsocial Behaviour, Repairs, Break-ins Etc). The Careline staff will call nominated contacts, emergency services, repairs or GP`s in these cases. Non-emergency cases, such as shopping, making appointments or organising transport etc should be directed to the appropriate service supplier.



Voice Recorder

All calls to the Careline are recorded.

The Council will undertake to ensure any information provided by the client will remain confidential. From time to time the council may be obliged by law or order of the court, to disclose your personal information to meet any legal or regulatory requirements or obligations

Agreement for the provision of a community Careline service

1 Service agreement:

- 1.1 The North Hertfordshire District Council ("The Council") will provide to the client named in Section 6.8 of this agreement ("the Client") a 24 hour daily community alarm monitoring service
- 1.2 The service is described in the attached Service Pack which is schedule 1 to this agreement and is known as the Careline Service ("the Careline Service").
- 1.3 The equipment installed to connect the Client to the Careline Service and the alarm activator that triggers the alarm are collectively referred to in this agreement as "the Connection Equipment".
- 1.4 This agreement will start on theday of 20.....and continue indefinitely until terminated according to its terms or upon the demise of the Client or where the Client is found to be incapable of managing his or her affairs within the meaning of Part VII of the Mental Health Act 1983.

2 Charges:

- 2.1 A quarterly charge for the Careline Service ("the Service Charge") must be paid in advance and will become due on the 1st of January, 1st of April, 1st of July and 1st of October each year as long as this agreement continues, or at other regular intervals as agreed with the between the Council and the Client.

- 2.2 Charges will be subject to an annual review on 1st April each year while this agreement continues and any increase in charges will be advised to the Client.
- 2.3 The initial amount of the charge for the Careline Service is the amount set out in Section 6.7 (“All Future Invoices”).
- 2.4 Invoices will be sent to the Client by the Council with respect to the charge for the Careline Service and information on how to pay for the Careline Service will be on the back of the invoices.

3 The client’s obligations:

- 3.1 The Client will pay the Service charge referred to in Section 2 of this agreement.
- 3.2 The Client will notify the Council of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the persons nominated as emergency contacts who may be called upon by the Council in an emergency relating to the Careline Service and the Client must inform the Council of any changes with regard to these persons and/or their particulars.
- 3.3 In the event of an emergency where the Client or the emergency contacts referred to in 3.2 above cannot be contacted or are unable to attend the property where the Connection Equipment is installed, the Council reserves the right to call out the police who may have to force entry into the property. The Council will not be liable for any costs incurred by the forced entry.

- 3.4 The Client will comply with the Community Careline Guidance Notes which will be issued by the Council to the Client with this agreement and any instructions issued by the Council in relation to the use of the Connection Equipment, and in particular the Client will:
- 3.4.1 advise the Council's Community Alarms Officer of any change in his/her circumstances;
 - 3.4.2 advise of any planned period of absence of Client and/or his/her emergency contacts referred to in 3.2 above;
 - 3.4.3 test the Connection Equipment every month by pressing the alarm activator referred to in 1.3 above;
 - 3.4.4 advise the Council's Community Alarms Officer when the Careline Service is no longer required.
- 3.5 If the control unit and pendant forming part of the Connection Equipment is purchased then the replacement of batteries, wear and tear and technical obsolescence will be the liability of the Client. If the Connection Equipment becomes faulty due to manufacturing defect and not due to fair wear and tear and where the Client notifies the Council of this by calling the Council using the numbers provided in the Community Careline Guidance Notes an engineer will be called to contact the Client within 24 hours. This will be free of charge including any parts required for repair with the exception of is rented all maintenance is covered in the rental charge.

This does not affect your statutory rights.

- 3.6 Only Council authorised agents are allowed to attempt to repair or modify the Connection Equipment. The control unit should only be disconnected on the advice of the Council by a Council authorised agent.
- 3.7 The Client shall be responsible for the cost of any repair or replacement of the Connection Equipment where any damage or malfunction has been caused by the Client's own acts or defaults or the acts or defaults of persons acting for them.
- 3.8 The Client will allow a representative of the Council reasonable access to the property where the Connection Equipment is installed, to make any necessary tests, alteration or repair to the Connection Equipment and for the recovery of the Connection Equipment as and when necessary.
- 3.9 Any rented Connection Equipment remains the property of the Council at all times and should not be sold or otherwise disposed of. At the end of the agreement any rented Connection Equipment must be returned to the Council. See Contact Details Section 6.6.
- 3.10 Any purchased Connection Equipment will need to be de-programmed at the end of this agreement. This can be done by the Council -see Contact Details Section 6.6.

4 The Council's obligations:

- 4.1 The Council will provide the Careline Service in accordance with the Community Careline Guidance Notes.
- 4.2 The Connection Equipment will be maintained in good working order, fair wear and tear excepted. Maintenance (or, at the Council's option, replacement) will be undertaken at the Council's expense except in the case of damage or malfunction caused by the Client or any person acting for the Client when clause 3.7 will apply.



- 4.3 The Council shall not be held responsible or liable for any damage to Client's property where the Connection Equipment is installed or for any failure or delay in providing the Careline Service. This would include delays in maintaining, repairing or replacing Connection Equipment if prevented by matters beyond its control including industrial action, inability to obtain spare parts, default of suppliers or contractors and failure of telephone lines.

Termination and Variation of the agreement:

- 5.1 The Council may terminate this Agreement on seven days notice in writing to the Client.
- 5.2 In addition to the rights of termination set out above, this agreement shall be terminable by either the Council or the Client giving three calendar months' notice in writing in advance to the other party or their representatives.
- 5.3 Any variation to the Careline Service under this agreement or to the agreement itself will only be valid when agreed in writing between the Council and the Client

6 General conditions:

- 6.1 All calls to the Careline which is the Council's Centre at 55 Harkness Court Hitchin SG4 0BS are recorded. Telephone numbers for the Careline can be found in the Community Careline Guidance Notes. Both the Client and the Council shall comply with any respective obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Council will undertake to ensure that any information provided by the Client will remain confidential. The Client may have access to written records relating to themselves held by the Council as a result of this agreement. This can be done by contacting the Council – see Contact Details Section 6.6.

From time to time the Council may be obliged by law or order of the court to disclose the Client's personal information or information relating to this agreement to meet any legal or regulatory requirements or obligations - for example the law enforcement agencies are able to require phone related information from the Council where it is relevant to their investigations into criminal activity.

Also, the Council has to abide by the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. In such circumstances the Council shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that those requirements or obligations are in accordance with applicable law.

- 6.2 The Council reserves the right to refuse connection to the Careline Service.
- 6.3 The Council reserves the right to sub-contract the Careline Service or any other service which relates to the provision of the Careline Service under this agreement.
- 6.4 The Client is allowed a period of 30 days from the date of signing the agreement to cancel the agreement and where it cancels the agreement during this 30-day period it will be entitled to a full refund of all money paid to the Council in advance as a result of this agreement. Where the Client does not cancel the agreement before the end of the 30-day period then the Council alone will decide what proportion (if any) of money that has been paid by the Client to the Council will be refunded to the Client.
- 6.5 The Council operates a Complaints procedure which can be found in the Service Pack



6.6 Where the Client needs to contact the Council under this agreement, the Council can be contacted as below:

North Herts Careline, 55 Harkness Court, Franklin Gardens
Hitchin, Herts, SG4 0BS

Tel: 01462 454609 (Community Lifelines Office)
01462 420600 (Out of Hours)

Fax: 01462 459005

E-mail: careline@north-herts.gov.uk

6.7 A copy of this agreement is to be retained by the Client for their information and future reference.

Equipment supplied:.....

Amount of first invoice payable by the Client

Amount of each future invoice payable by the Client
NB: that this shall be subject to annual increases with effect from
..... each year while this agreement continues

6.8 I/We have read and understood and agreed to the conditions of this agreement and the Service Pack.
I/We wish to proceed to procure the Careline Service.

Name:

Address:

Signature:

Date:

Protecting adults from abuse

A guide on how to recognise abuse and some helpful contacts if you are being abused, or if someone you know is being abused.

ABUSE CAN TAKE DIFFERENT FORMS

If you are being threatened, hurt or exploited by someone you feel you should be able to trust, then you can get help.

What is abuse? Examples are:

- **Physical:** hitting, slapping or not giving you medication that you need.
- **Financial:** stealing your money.
- **Emotional:** calling you names, shouting or ignoring you.
- **Sexual:** contact you do not want or have not consented to.
- **Neglect:** not giving you the support you need.
- **Discriminatory:** discrimination against an individual due to gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or disability.

Who abuses? Anyone:

- **It can be anyone:** it could be someone in a position of control or authority.
- **Family:** partner, child or other relatives, friend or neighbour.
- **Careworker:** in your home or at any day centres that you attend.

Where it can happen? Anywhere:

- In your home
- In care homes
- In sheltered housing
- In day centres
- In supported housing

What to do if it is happening to you or somebody you know:

- Tell somebody that you trust.
- Contact one of the organisations listed below.

Contacts:

Police.....	0845 3300222
In an emergency.....	999
Adult Care Services.....	0300 123 4042
North Hertfordshire District Council Strategy & Support Services.....	01462 474570
Action on Elder Abuse.....	0808 8088141
Age Concern England.....	0800 009966
Carers National Association.....	0345 573369
The Relatives & Residents Association.....	0207 3598136
Counsel & Care.....	0845 3007585
Hertfordshire Domestic Violence/Abuse line.....	0808 8088088

Avoiding Falls - Fifteen-point Action Plan

1. Take regular exercise, even if this is only a short walk, to keep muscles strong and joints supple.
2. Fit easy grip handrails on both sides of the stairs. Avoid/minimise climbing stairs if you do not feel safe climbing them.
3. Keep stairs and living areas well lit, use 100-watt bulbs where appropriate. Keep a torch by the bed.
4. Never leave objects which may be tripped over on stairs or in walking areas. Avoid flexes and cables crossing walking areas.
5. Use non-slip rubber mats in the bath/shower. Fit a handrail near the bath/toilet. Avoid small rugs in the bathroom.
6. Replace worn rugs and carpets. Nail or tape down the edge of rugs to avoid slips and trips.
7. Minimise bending/climbing. Keep frequently used items on racks or in drawers at an easy level. have a letter tray and rack fitted for deliveries.
8. If you must climb, then use proper steps. Never use chairs or tables, which may be unstable.
9. Get up from chairs/bed slowly. Blood pressure falls as you get up, and your body may take longer to adjust as you get older.

10. Avoid poorly fitting shoes or slippers and avoid high heels.
11. Have regular eye tests. Eyesight can deteriorate with age.
12. Avoid trailing clothes which may trip you up.
13. Don't rush to answer the telephone. Warn friends that it may take you longer to reach the telephone. Have an extension socket fitted upstairs.
14. If prescribed medication is making you feel dizzy, keep taking it, but consult your GP.
15. Keep rock salt handy to put on external paths in cold weather.

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What to do if you fall

What to do will depend upon the circumstances:

DON'T PANIC: You will probably feel a little shocked and shaken but try to stay calm.

Assess the situation:

If you are **hurt** or feel **unable to get up**, follow the **Rest and Wait Plan** (see next page).

If you are **unhurt** and know you are able to get up, **follow the Up and About Plan** (see next page).

See your GP: all falls are potentially serious and you should see your GP afterwards.

THE REST AND WAIT PLAN

If you are hurt or unable to get up, wait for help.

Try to summon help: use a pendant alarm if you have one, bang on the wall, call out for help, crawl towards your telephone, (keep it at a low level).

Move to a soft surface: if you have fallen on a hard floor, try to move to a carpeted area.

Keep warm: try to reach for something to cover yourself with. Try to move out of draughts.

Keep moving: do not lie in one position for too long, as you may get cold and suffer from pressure sores. Roll from side to side and move arms and legs if possible.

If you need to empty your bladder while on the floor, use a newspaper or item of clothing to soak up the wet and try to move from the wet area.

THE UP AND ABOUT PLAN

Before you attempt to get up, make sure that you are not hurt.

The method below is one safe way to get up from a fall but there are others. We strongly recommend that you ask for an assessment from a physiotherapist who can advise you on the most appropriate way to get up.

Roll onto hands and knees and crawl to a stable piece of furniture such as a bed, stool or chair.

With hands on the support, place one foot flat on the floor, bending your knee in front of your tummy.

Lean forwards, push on your feet and hands until you bring the other foot to be beside the first.

Turn and sit on the seat. Rest for a while before getting up.



Useful Telephone Numbers

Careline and Housing associations

Careline 24 Hour	01462 420600
Careline Office	01462 454609
Main Council	01462 474000
North Hertfordshire Homes	01462 704100
Howard Cottage	01462 683307

Helplines

Alzheimer's associations	01223 843899
Osteoporosis associations	01462 459449
Blind Society	0800 9154666
Age Concern	01438 314164
10 to 3 Clubs	01462 420911
Carers Support	01462 420911
Benefits Outreach	01462 420911

Hospitals

NHS Direct	0845 4647
Lister	01438 314333
QE2	01707 323272
Royston	01763 242134