



Support for patients with amputations

South Tyneside Patients



South Tyneside and Sunderland
NHS Foundation Trust

healthwatch
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Background

This information booklet has been developed by Healthwatch Sunderland and will be regularly updated and distributed by staff on Ward C36 at Sunderland Royal Hospital to support patients who have experienced an amputation.

The need for the signposting information in this booklet was highlighted to Healthwatch Sunderland by a local amputee, Andrea Smith.

Following Andrea's experience of being discharged from hospital after her amputation and not having the information to hand about local support services she needed, she saw there was a gap and contacted Healthwatch Sunderland. After initial discussions, she then introduced Healthwatch Sunderland to others who had a similar experience. They also explained that for them, many aspects of their lives had changed, and they didn't know where to start to look for information and support and they didn't want this to be the case for others in a similar situation.

Healthwatch Sunderland acted on this and worked closely with Andrea, Healthwatch South Tyneside and Healthwatch County Durham to collate information on a range of local services, on areas which were highlighted by the amputees, for the patients being discharged from Sunderland Royal Hospital. Separate booklets were then developed for each of the areas, to cover a range of subjects like, where to go for benefits advice, healthier lifestyle and general wellbeing support etc.

Sadly, before these booklets were completed and ready for distribution to patients, Andrea Smith passed away, so she didn't get to see the result of the work. Healthwatch Sunderland would like to dedicate these booklets to Andrea for her commitment to supporting others who experience amputation and their carers.



Andrea Smith and Wendy Hadlington, Healthwatch Sunderland.


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Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation from an amputation begins after your surgery and will continue at home. It is an important part of the recovery process and you will receive support from the hospital team. Here are some other organisations who can offer you support:

Service	Support offered	Referral details
<p>South Tyneside Adult Social Care (Let's Talk Team)</p>	<p>The Let's Talk Team ensure access to information and advice to support your wellbeing. This includes online information and telephone advice. You can speak with the team about accessing aids and adaptations for your home or about equipment which will enable you to live safely at home eg grab rails and banisters, bathing aids etc .</p> <p>This team will complete a brief assessment of your needs and refer you to the most appropriate service to support you.</p>	<p>You can call: 0191 424 6000 to access this service, either for yourself or someone you know. Please contact your GP if you would like to be assessed for walking aids such as Zimmer frames or for wheelchairs.</p> <p>Or email : LetsTalk@southtyneside.gov.uk</p> <p>Or visit: southtyneside.gov.uk and search Let's Talk Team</p>
<p>Assistive Technology</p> 	<p>Assistive technology is a range of electronic aids that can help you live independently and safely in your own home. These include fall detectors, personal alarms/pendants etc.</p>	<p>Call: 0191 455 5523 to find out if this service can support your needs</p> <p>Or visit: southtyneside.gov.uk and search assistive technology</p>

Rehabilitation

Service	Support offered	Referral details
<p>Disablement Services Centre</p>	<p>The Amputee Prosthetic and Rehabilitation Service is based in the Disablement Services Centre at the Freeman Hospital in Newcastle, it provides upper and lower limb prosthetics to adults and children across the Northeast of England.</p> <p>DSC work to provide the highest quality care and help people achieve the best possible results, involving them in all decisions made around their rehabilitation.</p> <p>If you are given an artificial limb, you will remain a patient at the DSC for as long as you wear the limb.</p> <p>This service includes providing, maintaining and repairing artificial limbs. You can make an appointment to see your Prosthetist or any other member of the team whenever you need to. Yearly appointments are recommended to have the prosthesis checked.</p>	<p>Patients are normally referred to the service by hospital surgical teams after amputation</p> <p>GPs and other healthcare professionals can also refer patients to this service</p>
<p>Lower Limb Amputee Rehabilitation</p>	<p>Led by Specialist Physiotherapists and providing outpatient-based assessment and treatment to adults over the age of 18 with lower limb amputation. With some home-based physiotherapy on a individual needs basis.</p> <p>Working closely with the Disablement Services Centre (DSC) at Newcastle Freeman Royal Hospital, this service supports you through early rehabilitation, early prosthetic rehabilitation and to work towards achieving goals with prosthetic wear.</p>	<p>Your GP, Consultant, Specialist Nurse, Therapist or the DSC specialist therapy team can refer you to this service</p>



Mental Health Support

An amputation can change many aspects of your life and you may find you need some support for your mental health and wellbeing. Here are some of the organisations who can support you:

Service	Support offered	Referral details
Kind Mind Community	Will help you to focus on your own wellbeing and mental health at one of the local hubs or online. This organisation focuses on wellbeing activities, groups and volunteering opportunities.	Call: 0191 217 2935 to refer yourself to this service Or you can email: kindmindcommunity@everyturn.org Visit: kindmindcommunity.org to find out more
Lifecycle Primary Care Mental Health Service	Provide mental health services to support people of all ages.	Accessed via self-referral or referral by your GP Call: 0191 283 2937 Email: stsft.mhadminteam@nhs.net Visit: www.southtynesidelifecyclementalhealth.nhs.uk

Mental Health Support – Crisis Support

Service	Support offered	Referral details
NHS 111	111 will tell you the right place to get help. You may be able to speak to a nurse, or mental health nurse over the phone.	Call: 111 for support Or visit: 111.nhs.uk and go to Mental Health Help
Samaritans	24-hour service. If you need someone to talk to, they listen. They won't judge or tell you what to do. You can remain anonymous if you wish to do so.	Call for support: 116 123 Or visit: samaritans.org
Together in a Crisis	<p>Working locally to offer support if you are in a mental health crisis caused by practical situations that are impacting your life. This could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debt or financial worries caused by the cost-of-living crisis • Housing issues • Relationship difficulties • Problems with drugs or alcohol 	<p>You can refer yourself by calling: 0300 131 0333</p> <p>Or refer yourself online here: everyturn.org/crisis-support/self-refer/</p>



Finances

After your amputation you may find that your financial circumstances have changed. You may be entitled to some financial support, or your current benefits may need to be reassessed. Here are some of the local support services who can help you with this:

Service	Support offered	Referral details
<p>Citizens Advice South Tyneside</p>	<p>Free, impartial and confidential advice and information to help you find the way forward and resolve your issues. They advise on a range of subject areas including welfare benefits and debt.</p>	<p>To access the service call: 0191 455 7958</p> <p>Or email: admin@southtynecab.net</p> <p>Visit: southtynelca.net to find out more</p>
<p>The Social Navigators</p>	<p>Can provide intensive support to South Tyneside residents experiencing financial wellbeing issues.</p> <p>Social Navigators can help and give you support with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessing welfare benefit and debt services • accessing employability services • getting help with digital skills • getting the best deals on your gas and electricity bills • grants to buy essential furniture items • accessing other agencies who can help with others issues 	<p>Call the Welfare Support Team: 0191 424 6040</p> <p>Referrals can be made to the service by sending an email to: Welfaresupport@southtynesidehomes.org.uk.</p> <p>Please state in your email that it's for the attention of the Social Navigators.</p>

Driving

Driving is still an option after your amputation, but you must inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Below are some organisations that will also give you support and advice:

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
DVLA	If you have had an amputation and you intend to drive you must inform the DVLA.	<p>Call: 0300 790 6806 to inform them of your change in circumstances</p> <p>Or complete an online form GI: gov.uk/amputations-and-driving</p>
North East Drive Mobility	Information, advice and assessment for people who have a medical condition or are recovering from an accident or injury which may affect their ability to drive or access a motor vehicle.	<p>Call: 0191 287 5090 to access support</p> <p>Or email : northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk</p> <p>Visit: cntw.nhs.uk and search North East Drive Mobility for more information</p>
Blue Badge Scheme, South Tyneside Council	Blue badge permits allow parking in disabled bays and town centre car parks for free and without time limit.	<p>Call: 0191 427 7000 to apply</p> <p>Email: BlueBadge@southtyneside.gov.uk</p> <p>Visit: southtyneside.gov.uk and search Blue Badge</p>

Support at work

There is support to help you to remain at work after your amputation or to help you to get into work.

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Access to work	Help you get into work or stay in work if you have a physical or mental health condition or disability.	Call: 0191 215 2000 for support Or visit: gov.uk/access-to-work to find out more
Disability Employment Adviser (Jobcentre Plus)	Disability Employment Advisers (DEA) work for Job Centre Plus and help people, whose disability or health condition is preventing them from obtaining work. A DEA will know about disability friendly employers in your area.	Call : 0345 604 3719 to see how they can support you Or visit: gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus



Lifestyle

There are a range of services across South Tyneside who can support you to live a healthier lifestyle.

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
<p>South Tyneside Stop Smoking Service</p>	<p>If you're ready to quit smoking, they're here to help. Their team of experts can provide you with the tools, support, and guidance you need to kick the habit for good.</p>	<p>Call on: 0191 424 7300 to access support to quit</p> <p>Or visit: southtyneside.gov.uk and search stop smoking</p>
<p>South Tyneside Adult Recovery Service (STARS)</p>	<p>Offer ways for local people with drug and alcohol problems to become free from their dependence.</p> <p>Aiming to help people reduce the problems that substance misuse causes to families, friendships, workplaces and communities.</p> <p>There is also an onsite Needle Syringe Programme (Needle exchange) Monday – Friday between 10-4.</p>	<p>Call: 0191 917 1160 to get support</p> <p>Or visit: stadultrecoveryservice.co.uk</p> <p>Or pop along to: Cookson House, River Drive, South Shields, NE33 1TL</p>



Lifestyle

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Diabetes UK South Tyneside Group	Friendship and support for those living with diabetes and its effects.	<p>To access support email: southtynesidediabetesgroup@gmail.com</p> <p>Or pop along to: St Gregory's Church Hall, Borough Rd, Harton Nook, NE34 6NR. (Second Wednesday of month 5.30pm)</p>
Tailored Leisure	Offer seated exercise classes, spa therapy bookings, accessible short break holiday bookings and volunteering opportunities for disabled people.	<p>Call to see what they have to offer: 0786 1247 658</p> <p>Or visit: tailoredleisure.co.uk</p>



General support

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Age Concern South Tyneside (ACTS)	Help, advice and support on a range of issues for older people including benefits, disability and health. You can contact Age Concern to self refer for things like grab rails and banisters.	Refer yourself to this service by calling: 0191 456 6903 Or email: info@ac-ts.org Visit: ac-ts.org.uk to find out more
Day One Trauma	Offer support to people and their families after a traumatic accident or life-changing event. Offering practical and emotional support.	Call to refer yourself for support: 0300 303 5648 Or visit: dayonetrauma.org to find out more
Recovery at Home	Offer a range of services, operating all day every day, including weekends and Bank holidays. In addition to Nursing staff (who are able to assess those who are acutely unwell and support with dressings and catheter issues) the team has Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Therapy Practitioners /Support Workers who provide rehabilitation at home and can provide equipment to maintain safety and independence at home, potentially preventing hospital admission. The team also provide exercise programmes and work with patients around mobility and confidence building.	Call to see if they can support offer you support: 0191 283 1930

General support

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Step Prosthetics	A website which has a list of a wide range of charitable organisations in the UK who deliver a variety of support services to amputees, people with limb difference, and their families.	Call: 0114 4000 232 for information Or visit: stepsprosthetics.com
Connected Caring	Supporting unpaid adult carers in the community by offering tailored solutions, giving choice, control, and independence.	Refer yourself by calling freephone number: 0800 304 7724 Or email: info@connectedcaring.org.uk Visit: connectedcaring.org.uk for more information
Veterans Response	One stop charitable “go to” organisation that seeks to meet the needs of our armed forces veterans and their families.	Call: 0191 427 4764 to access support Or visit: veteranstraining.co.uk Or pop along to: 96-98 King Street, South Sheilds, NE33 1JE



Healthwatch South Tyneside your local health and social care champion



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



Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.



Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.



Our values

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





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