



Support for patients with amputations

Sunderland Patients

NHS

South Tyneside and Sunderland
NHS Foundation Trust

healthwatch
Sunderland

Background

This information booklet has been developed by Healthwatch Sunderland and will be 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
Adult Social Care	A team of social workers and therapists, providing advice and support about your care. Including wheelchair services, equipment services, home adaptations and access to social care assessments.	<p>You can call: 0191 520 5552 to access this services, either for yourself or someone you know</p> <p>Visit: sunderland.gov.uk/yourcare</p>
Assistive Technology	The Assistive Technology Team at Sunderland Care and Support work with families to find digital solutions to everyday problems for people living with a range of issues because of disability and/or old age.	<p>Call: 0191 520 5552 if you would like to know more about this service</p> <p>Or visit: sunderlandcareandsupport.co.uk and search assistive technology</p>



Rehabilitation

Service	Support offered	Referral details
<p>Disablement Services Centre (DSC)</p>	<p>The Amputee Prosthetic and Rehabilitation Service is based in the DSC 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
<p>Sunderland Talking Therapies</p>	<p>Offer several therapies, classes and groups to help with a range of common mental health difficulties.</p> <p>They can help you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more about common symptoms and how they affect you • Learn effective coping strategies to help to improve your wellbeing • Cope better with future difficulties 	<p>Call the self-referral line on: 0191 566 5454</p> <p>Visit: sunderlandtalkingtherapies.co.uk for further information or to complete a self-referral form online</p>
<p>Sunderland Recovery College</p>	<p>Offer courses, workshops and drop-in classes to residents of Sunderland to support mental health.</p>	<p>Call: 0191 561 2276 or 07500 551 869 for more information</p> <p>Or visit: sunderlandrecoverycollege.co.uk</p>



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
Citizens Advice Sunderland	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.	Call: 0808 278 7950 to access support Or email: enquiries@citizensadvicesunderland.co.uk
Local support	Links to local organisations who offer free information, advice and guidance on welfare support, debt, employment, and housing matters plus help with food (such as local foodbanks) in the area where you live.	Call: 0191 520 5551 to access support Or visit: sunderland.gov.uk/get-support



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.	Call: 0300 790 6806 to inform them of your change in circumstances Or complete an online form G1: gov.uk/amputations-and-driving
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.	Call: 0191 287 5090 to access support Or email : northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk Or visit: cntw.nhs.uk and search North East Drive Mobility for more information
Blue Badge Scheme, Sunderland City Council	Blue badge permits allow parking in disabled bays and town centre car parks for free and without time limit.	Call: 0191 520 5552 to apply Or visit: sunderland.gov and search Blue Badge Scheme

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 to get into work or to 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
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 Sunderland who can support you to live a healthier lifestyle.

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Sunderland Stop Smoking Service	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>Call on: 0191 567 1057 to access support to quit</p> <p>Or email: sunderland.stopsmokingservice@nhs.net</p> <p>For more information visit: sunderlandstopsmokingservice.co.uk</p>
Change, Grown, Live	Offering support to make positive changes to your drug or alcohol use. Working across Sunderland offering one-to-one, group, and peer support. Providing information, advice, treatment, and support and can meet you in different locations across Sunderland. They have hubs in the city centre, Washington and Houghton-le-Spring.	<p>Call: 0800 234 6798 to get support</p> <p>Or email: SunderlandSMS.info@cgl.org.uk</p> <p>Or visit: changegrowlive.org to find out more</p>
Diabetes UK	Support on living with diabetes.	<p>Call: 0345 123 2399 for support</p> <p>Or visit: diabetes.org.uk</p>
Links for Life Sunderland	Online support for people in Sunderland to find information, advice and guidance on a wide range of health and wellbeing topics and activities.	<p>Visit: linksforlifesunderland.co.uk</p>



Lifestyle

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Foundation of Light Disability Programmes	A wide range of disability programmes to ensure young people and adults across the Northeast can enjoy sport, an active lifestyle and build friendships.	<p>Call: 0191 563 4777 to access their services</p> <p>Or visit: foundationoflight.co.uk and search disability programmes</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 124 7658</p> <p>Or visit: tailoredleisure.co.uk</p>



General support

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Age UK Sunderland	Front Door service: focusing on low level community support linking people aged 50+ to their local services and support. The service focusses on the prevention of ill health and enables older people to stay independent and well for longer.	Call: 0191 565 9045 to refer yourself or someone you know Or visit: ageuk.org.uk/sunderland and search Front Door Service
Day One Trauma	Offer support to people and their families after a traumatic accident or life-changing event. Offering practical and emotional support.	Call: 0300 303 5648 to access support Or visit: dayonetrauma.org
Recovery at Home	Support to manage your condition at home. Can be contacted 24 hours a day 7 days a week.	You can refer yourself by calling: 0191 561 6666 Visit: stsft.nhs.uk and search Recovery at Home for more information
Social Prescribers	Support people with their wider health and wellbeing, such as debt, poor housing and physical inactivity, as well as other lifestyle issues and low-level mental health concerns by increasing people's active involvement with their local communities.	The receptionists at your GP practice can refer you to this service or you can refer yourself by visiting: sunderlandhealthandwellnesshub.nhs.uk and searching social prescribers

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
Sunderland Carers Centre	Information, advice, guidance and support for carers.	Call: 0191 549 3768 to self-refer into this service Or visit: sunderlandcarers.co.uk for more information
Sunderland Health and Wellness Hub	A website full of information about health and care services across Sunderland.	Visit: sunderlandhealthandwellnesshub.nhs.uk to see the full range of information and support services
Veterans in Crisis	Offering support if you are a veteran and you're registered with a Sunderland GP and need help (or you know of someone that is, however, long it takes).	Call: 0191 5671 878 to access their service Or visit: veteransincrisis.co.uk to find out more



Healthwatch Sunderland 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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