



# Support for patients with amputations

**County Durham Patients**

**NHS**  
South Tyneside and Sunderland  
NHS Foundation Trust

**healthwatch**  
Sunderland

**healthwatch**  
County Durham

# 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.

## Contents

Rehabilitation	4
Mental Health Support	6
Mental Health Support – Crisis Support	7
Finances	8
Driving	9
Support at Work	10
Lifestyle	11
General support	13
Healthwatch County Durham	15



# 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 Direct	Can assist you to find information and advice to help you live as independently as you can.	<p>Call: 03000 267979 to refer yourself or someone you know to this service</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://durham.gov.uk">durham.gov.uk</a> and search Social Care Direct</p>
Assistive Technology	Adapting your home to meet your needs. Durham County Council offers a guide to the kinds of adaptations available that can improve your independence.	<p>Call: 03000 26 0000 if you would like to know more about this service</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://durham.gov.uk">durham.gov.uk</a> and search 'adapting your home to meet your needs'</p>



# Rehabilitation

Service	Support offered	Referral details
<p><b>Disablement Services Centre (DSC)</b></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><b>Lower Limb Amputee Rehabilitation</b></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
Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance	Provides mental health wellbeing and recovery services for those needing support in County Durham.	Call: 0300 3045527 to refer yourself for support  Or visit: <a href="http://durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org">durhammentalwellbeingalliance.org</a>
Talking Therapies	A self-help, counselling and talking therapies service designed to help anyone living in County Durham and Darlington area to deal with common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, or depression as well as panic phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and post-traumatic stress disorder.	Call: 0191 333 3300 to refer yourself for support  Or visit: <a href="http://durhamanddarlingtontalkingtherapies.org.uk">durhamanddarlingtontalkingtherapies.org.uk</a>
ARCH Recovery College	Free face-to-face, small group educational sessions, around understanding mental health, wellbeing and recovery. They aim to help you understand various mental health diagnoses and equip you with the skills and knowledge needed to manage your own recovery, have hope and gain more control over their life.	Refer yourself by calling: 0191 384 3895 (select option 2)  Or visit: <a href="mailto:tewv.recoverycollege@nhs.net">tewv.recoverycollege@nhs.net</a> to find out more

# 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: <a href="https://111.nhs.uk">111.nhs.uk</a> 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: <a href="https://samaritans.org">samaritans.org</a>
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"> <li>• Debt or financial worries caused by the cost-of-living crisis</li> <li>• Housing issues</li> <li>• Relationship difficulties</li> <li>• Problems with drugs or alcohol.</li> </ul>	<p>You can refer yourself by calling: 0300 131 0333</p> <p>Or refer yourself online here: <a href="https://everyturn.org/crisis-support/self-refer/">everyturn.org/crisis-support/self-refer/</a></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 County Durham	Providing free, confidential, and impartial advice including money benefit, housing or employment problems.	Call: 0808 2787821 to access support  Or visit: <a href="http://citizensadvicecd.org.uk">citizensadvicecd.org.uk</a>
Advice in County Durham	Can provide benefits advice or look at what income you are entitled to if your circumstances have changed.	Access support by emailing: <a href="mailto:adviceincountydurham@durham.gov.uk">adviceincountydurham@durham.gov.uk</a>  Or by visiting: <a href="http://adviceincountydurham.org.uk">adviceincountydurham.org.uk</a>





# Driving

Driving is still an option after your amputation, but you must inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Below are also 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>Complete an online form G1: <a href="http://gov.uk/amputations-and-driving">gov.uk/amputations-and-driving</a></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: to access support</p> <p>Or email : <a href="mailto:northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk">northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk</a></p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://cntw.nhs.uk">cntw.nhs.uk</a> and search North East Drive Mobility for more information</p>
Blue Badge Scheme, Durham Council	Blue badge permits allow parking in disabled bays and town centre car parks for free and without time limit.	<p>Call: 03000 269 425 to apply</p> <p>Or email: <a href="mailto:bluebadgescheme@durham.gov.uk">bluebadgescheme@durham.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://durham.gov.uk">durham.gov.uk</a> and search Apply 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 to see how they can support you  Or visit: <a href="http://gov.uk/access-to-work">gov.uk/access-to-work</a>
Durham Able	Job support if you have a disability or mental health condition. They have a team of job coaches across County Durham to support you in work and beyond to ensure you are confident and settled in your workplace.	Call: 03000 269 899 to access support  Or visit: <a href="mailto:durhamenable@durham.gov.uk">durhamenable@durham.gov.uk</a>
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: <a href="http://gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus">gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus</a>



## Lifestyle

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

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Smokefree County Durham	<p>Their service can offer you an individual quit programme for up to 12 weeks.</p> <p>You will be offered weekly tailored advice and support from a Specialist Practitioner to help plan and manage your quit attempt.</p>	<p>Call: 0800 772 0565 and get support to quit</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://smokefreecountydurham.co.uk">smokefreecountydurham.co.uk</a></p>
County Durham Drug and Alcohol services	<p>Providing an accessible service for everyone who lives in County Durham and who needs help with any drug or alcohol misuse related matter.</p>	<p>Call: 03000 266 666 to access support</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://codurhamrecovery.co.uk">codurhamrecovery.co.uk</a></p>
Diabetes UK	<p>Support on living with diabetes.</p>	<p>Call: 0345 123 2399 for more information</p> <p>Or visit: <a href="http://diabetes.org.uk">diabetes.org.uk</a></p>

# Lifestyle

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Wellbeing for Life	They will help you with a wide range of social, emotional and practical needs with a focus on 'What matters to you' helping improve your mental and physical wellbeing and general health.	Call: 0800 8766887 to get support Or email: <a href="mailto:Cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net">Cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net</a> Or visit: <a href="http://wellbeingforlife.net">wellbeingforlife.net</a>
Tailored Leisure	Accessible exercise and short breaks. Seated exercise classes, spa therapy bookings, accessible short breaks and holiday bookings and volunteering opportunities.	Call to see what they have to offer: 0786 124 7658 Or visit: <a href="http://tailoredleisure.co.uk">tailoredleisure.co.uk</a>



## General support

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
Age UK County Durham	Offering a range of support services and activities for people aged 50+.	Call: 0191 3863856 to find out about their range of services  Or email: <a href="mailto:wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk">wellbeing@ageukcountydurham.org.uk</a>  Or visit: <a href="http://ageuk.org.uk/countydurham">ageuk.org.uk/countydurham</a>
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: <a href="http://dayonetrauma.org">dayonetrauma.org</a>
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: <a href="http://stepsprosthetics.com">stepsprosthetics.com</a>
Durham County Carers Support	Provide free high-quality services and support to unpaid carers over the age of 18, who support someone or care for someone living in County Durham & Darlington.	Call: 0300 0051213 (Durham) 0300 0301215 (Darlington) for carers support  Or visit: <a href="http://dccarers.org">dccarers.org</a>

# General support

Service	Support offered	Referral Details
The Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA)	SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity is a trusted source of support for serving personnel, veterans and their families in their time of need.	Call: 0800 260 6767 to access support or find out more about their service  Or visit: <a href="http://ssafa.org.uk/durham">ssafa.org.uk/durham</a>



## Healthwatch County Durham 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.





**Healthwatch County Durham**  
**Whitfield House**  
**St Johns Road**  
**Meadowfield Industrial Estate**  
**Durham**  
**DH7 8XL**

**[www.healthwatchcountydurham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchcountydurham.co.uk)**

**t: 0800 3047039**

**e: [healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net)**

**X @hwcountydurham**

**f @Healthwatchcountydurham**

**@healthwatchcodurham**