



Welfare and safety concerns

Staying safe

If you care for someone who is elderly or vulnerable, you may worry about how safe they are in their home. There are simple ways you can help ensure their welfare and safety.

Home security

You can improve home security in the following ways:

- Store valuables out of sight of windows.
- Fit a security light or security alarm.
- Make sure that all doors and windows are in good condition and have adequate locks.
- Leave lights or a radio on to deter thieves when the home is empty. If the home will be empty for a long time, ask a neighbour to check the house regularly.

Local police should be able to give you advice about home security.

Bogus callers

It's a good idea for the person you care for not to open the door to someone unless they're expecting them or know who they are. Fitting a security chain, door viewer or monitor screen will allow the person you care for to see who's at the door without having to open it.

Salespeople or professionals should be asked for ID. If in doubt, they should ask the caller to return when someone else is present.

Fire safety

You can minimise the risk of fire by considering:

- **Prevention.** Electrical appliances, cigarettes and cooking are all potential fire hazards.
- **Detection.** Install and maintain smoke detectors, on each floor. Detectors with indicators such as a flashing light are available for people with hearing impairments.

- **Restricting the spread of fire.** Close internal doors and perhaps consider installing fire doors and automatic door closing devices. If the person you care for has limited mobility, consider a sprinkler system for the home.
- **Escape.** Make sure that the person you care for knows how to get out of the house if there is a fire, and that their escape path is clear. If they use a mobility aid, they'll need it within reach at all times. If they're visually impaired, tactile markers along the escape route can be helpful.

Your local fire service may offer free fire risk assessments.

If you have questions about your financial situation, benefits, working or require practical advice, call our free, confidential helpline on 0808 802 02 02 or visit www.nhs.uk/carersdirect.

Carers Direct is a free national service. We offer information, advice and support for people who care for someone else.

Our comprehensive website has over 1,000 articles, 12 videos and a host of web tools to help you make decisions about your caring role. If you prefer to talk to someone about what options are available to you, our helpline advisors are on hand seven days a week, and in confidence, to do just that.

Call free on 0808 802 02 02*
or go to www.nhs.uk/carersdirect

Carers Direct

*All calls from UK landlines and mobile phones are free. Lines are open 8am to 9pm, Monday to Friday, and 11am to 4pm on weekends and bank holidays. Textphone users should call 18001 0808 802 02 02. To use our call back service, in English and other languages, please go to www.carersdirectenquiry.nhs.uk/callback/carers.aspx