

**Information & Advice - Practical Tips to maximise Independence and safety**

**Nutrition**

* if someone cannot lift a cup they may be able to use a long straw with the cup positioned to enable independence with hydration
* A table positioned nearby will enable regular provisions to be placed nearby – over bed tables are available to purchase in a variety of designs.
* A perching stool to enable a person to sit at a work surface where they may be able to prepare food/ drinks may promote participation/ safety
* A well organised work surfaceso you have everything you need within easy reach to reduce the demands on your body will simplify tasks
* A trolley may support a person to transport food/ drink from kitchen area to another room without compromising their mobility
* Use of a one- pot machine to make hot drinks can promote independence and safety
* adaptive cutlery, dycem matting and plate surrounds
* Again energy conservation e having everything to hand i.e. tea coffee sugar on the worktop.  Not sure if we do provide them but could we mention provision of adaptive kitchens for wheelchair uses i.e. worktops that are height adjustable

**Personal Hygiene**

* Regular and effective personal care not only improves our self-esteem but in some situations is vital to help PREVENT health complications such as urinary tract infections
* Access to a bathing facility may be in the person’s home/ community facility (Extra Care facility, Changing room facility – see National Scheme- in Darlington in Dolphin centre.)
* A Seat next to the sink or within the shower cubicle will enable a person to sit more safely and promote their ability to reach to more parts of the body
* Long handled sponge, long handled hairbrush, energy conservation i.e. having everything to hand such as toiletries and makeup, height adjustable sinks, shower toileting chairs which enable user to wheel over the toilet
* A Disabled facilities Grant can enable a major adaptation – level access shower
* Remember the person doesn’t have to do all the task if they are unable to manage, but it is important to encourage them to do as much as they can for themselves, improving confidence
* Personal Hygiene – towelling bath robe to help pat dry self and preserve energy. Could mention bath seats/bath lifts as well as equipment for showering.

Toileting

* A urinal may enable independence through the night – this may encourage regular drinking through the day promoting cognitive and physical function
* A commode next to the bed may reduce the need to mobilise to a toilet through the night - this may REDUCE or PREVENT a fall
* Increasing the height of the toilet will simplify the transfer and may promote independence/ REDUCE the level of assistance needed
* A frame around the toilet / grab rail will enable a more controlled, safer transfer.
* There are also washing/drying toilets which can assist a person to self-clean – these are funding via the Disabled Facility grants which are means tested.

**Being appropriately clothed**

* The importance of choosing what clothes you may want to wear
* Changing into day clothes to assist someone with day & night routines
* Dressing from a seated position promotes stability when dressing the upper body
* Sitting opposite a mirror will enable the individual to monitor progress with dressing
* Use of long handled aids increases a person’ s reach and may enable socks/ pants to be put on over the feet independently
* Use of one handed dressing techniques will promote dignity, self-image and
* Dressing – clothes without fastenings or adapting fastenings if reduced dexterity.

**Maintaining a habitable home environment**

Participation in domestic activities can be promoted by breaking down/ simplifying tasks.

* Light weight hoovers and long handled mops and brushes can increase an individual’s reach. A window opener will aid control over access to fresh air.
* Energy conservation e having everything to hand i.e. tea coffee sugar on the worktop.  Not sure if we do provide them but could we mention provision of adaptive kitchens for wheelchair uses ie worktops that are height adjustable

**Making Use of the Home Safely**

* Living fully and safely in your chosen home is important.
* Being able to access your home, being safe and warm, mobility around the home, access to bathing and toilet facility, access to the garden.
* Refraining from using the stairs is sometimes necessary if this could present a falls risk/ challenge owing to exercise tolerance.
* Minor adaptations including grab and wall to floor rails at accesses, ramping temporarily and semi-permanent, doors widened to accommodate wheelchair users.

**Maximising Mobility**

Stay as active as you can keep mobile - it’s good for the muscles and joints. If you have been prescribed a walking aid use it – it may prevent a fall. Adequate lighting is important to promote safe mobility. Also decluttering, removing loose rugs, installing banisters and grab rails, Use colour contrast to make objects stand out. Exercise, even walking, can help improve your/your child’s energy levels, mood and fitness

Checking footwear is appropriate and fitted well

Mobility (under specialist equipment) mention stand aids as well as hoisting.

**Stairs**

If you can manage safely using the stairs is excellent form of exercise. It keeps the hips strong. If you are limited in ability to use the stairs owing to physical reasons frequency of use may need to be considered. If you have a significant impairment a stair lift may be recommended which may be funded via the Disabled Facilitates Grant (DFG) or private purchase. For someone with a cognitive impairment the use of a stair lift may be hazardous. In order to promote safety handrails are recommended as well as colour contrasts to promote perception of depth. For someone with a more advanced cognitive impairment use of the stairs may be best avoided.

**Transfers**

Getting up and down (sit-stand-sit) from surfaces such a chairs, toilet, bed can be made easier by ensuring these are the right height. A general guide is ensuring that the seat height is at the optimum for the individual, i.e. hips at 90 degrees with the hips when seated.

Aids to assist with transfers including bed levers, shower boards and chair raisers

**Specialist equipment**

If an individual is unable to weight bear/ transfer themselves from one place to another specialist equipment may be required. This may enable access to a specialist chair which might further promote the individuals engagement in their world \*\*\*\*

**Developing or Maintaining Family or other personal relationships**

**As a parent -** be organised**.** Check your/your child’s daily routine has a balance of work, rest and leisure/play activities.

**Plan ahead.** Break your/your child’s tasks into small steps, plan plenty of time to complete tasks and take regular breaks.

**To manage any challenges identify the triggers** that negatively impact you/your child and look for ways to reduce or manage them

**Referral to Environmental Controls**

Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS assessment to enable control of environment including communications with others- telephone/ face time

**Access and engagement in Work, Training, Education and Volunteering.**

Referral to other agencies – access to work, blue badge scheme, Concessionary travel

**Making use of Necessary Facilities in the Local Community Access to the community**

**Stay connected with others, access your community, go to the shops, use local facilities, use technology**

Accessing local community – improving access to own home (as per mobility section).

**Manage your activities**

**Plan ahead**. Break your tasks into small steps and give yourself plenty of time to get to where you need to be and complete your tasks.

Carrying out Caring Responsibilities for an adult

Pace yourselfand take regular breaks. If you experience fatigue, breathlessness or chronic pain, spread your activities throughout the day or week.

**Use technology**. Try shopping online or using apps that help manage your health or environment, and social media to keep in touch with friends and family

 Sleep is important, but if you are struggling, try avoiding tea and coffee, taking a bath, using blackout curtains, listening to gentle music or deep breathing exercises.

**Keep doing what you enjoy**. Living is more than the everyday tasks we have to do.

**Keep your routine going**

**Take time to relax** Outcomes- improved physical health or social activity