

Showering

As people develop dementia they often resist getting into a shower or bath. My suggestion is to investigate hand grabs which can have suction pads or be fitted permanently.

VAT Relief

VAT relief may be available when buying goods and services that are “designed solely for disabled people”. However in the case of say a shower HMRC accept that the shower will also be used by other members of the household and their advice is to complete the eligibility declaration form that is on their internet site and speak to your supplier/installer.

Council Tax Band Reduction for Disabilities

If you have modifications to your house completed to accommodate the needs of someone within the household who has a disability you can apply to your local council for a council tax band reduction.

If you qualify, your bill will be reduced to the next lowest Council Tax band. For example, if your property is in Band D, you will pay the Band C rate.

If your home is already in the lowest Band (Band A), you will get a 17% discount on your Council Tax bill instead.

You will have to show that you have one or more of the following reasons for your application:-

- (i) A room which is predominately used by and required for meeting the needs of the disabled person.
- (ii) A second bathroom or kitchen required for meeting the needs of the disabled person.
- (iii) A wheelchair used indoors by the disabled person.

The property must be the main home of at least one disabled person. This can be an adult or a child - it does not have to be the person responsible for paying the Council Tax.

Guidance is available on:

<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-for-disabled-people>. Together with a link to your council's application form

Dental Care Services available if you can no longer attend your dental practice

Community Dental Care.

This is secondary dental care for patients who cannot be seen in general practice. This covers a number of conditions including dementia. Patients are seen at an NHS Hospital, specialist health centres or mobile clinics. Or the dentists working in the community come to your home to provide care.

Details of the local community dental service can be obtained from the local primary care organisation (England), the local health board (Wales) the dental practice board (National Services Scotland) or the local trust (Northern Ireland).

Domiciliary Dental Care

This is where a general dental practitioner has an NHS contract to visit patients in their own home when they cannot visit the practice in person. This is not available throughout the UK.

2. Registering Lasting Power Of Attorney (LPA)

If they were registered before 2007 they were called Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)

The person with dementia will gradually lose their ability to manage their finances and potentially their healthcare. The person with dementia needs to approve and sign the form so it is essential to broach the subject well before they lose the power to understand and as in our case physically sign the form.

There are two types:- “Lasting Power of Attorney (property and financial affairs) and Lasting Power of Attorney (health and welfare)

If you do it yourself there is a registration fee of £82 each, but people often choose to do it through their solicitor who will naturally charge an additional fee.

I WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND YOU LOOK INTO THIS AS SOON AS YOU FEEL ABLE. <https://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney>

GUIDANCE 2 continued to GUIDANCE 6 ARE AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET SITE www.dementiaguidance.co.uk

Dementia Guidance

*For People with Dementia
Their Friends and Family*

www.dementiaguidance.co.uk

Dementia Guidance provides a guide to free services available throughout the UK to people with dementia and their families.

My wife was diagnosed with dementia in early 2018 and since then I have come across benefits and services that are available without any cost being involved.

Even though you are faced with the life changing diagnosis of dementia, there is no method of automatically telling you about these services.

In our own case we have found them out merely by chance.

I have included one or two suggestions that involve some cost but I would strongly advise you consider them.

The purpose of this leaflet is to provide you with a short list of suggestions to put you on the right track.

There are several fantastic charities who have plenty of good advice and offer tremendous services but I simply wanted to put together a brief guide based on our own experience. There are a number of broad groups of guidance:-

1. Free benefits available to everyone with dementia whatever your income.

2. Registering Power of Attorney, there are two to consider and they are chargeable.

3. Free advice from Charities

4. Advisory and social groups for the person with dementia and their carers and separate groups for carers only. (you may have to pay for a cup of tea or coffee)

5. Respite Care. One essential aspect is that if someone is caring for their partner or friend they must make time for themselves, otherwise both they and the person with dementia will suffer.

6. Contingency Plans. Just in case you as the carer have an accident, major or minor you need to have set in place contact and care details should either the emergency services or your friends and family need to take over for a while.

1. Free benefits available to everyone with dementia whatever their income.

I have deliberately not included any income related or means tested benefits as these will be personal to your own circumstances and require specialist knowledge and advice.

Attendance Allowance.

It is a non contributory benefit available to people with dementia over pensionable age, 6 months after they start to require another person to provide day or night time attention to their bodily or safety needs.

Despite the name this is not to pay for someone to be in attendance. It is paid directly to the person with dementia whatever their circumstance and can be used for anything they choose, be it taxi fares, a gardener or the occasional meal out.

As at 01.04.2024 it is either (1) £72.65 or (2) £108.55 per week depending on whether the person needs assistance (1) during the day or night or (2) both day and night. The form is 31 pages long with some 52 questions.

There is no requirement for a formal diagnosis.

The form can be found on the GOV.UK site under Attendance Allowance claim form.

Personally I would not recommend tackling this yourself. There are charities out there to help, some can do most of it over the phone. A local Age UK or Citizens Advice may be able to help complete an application.

DO NOT BE PUT OFF BY THE FORM AS THIS CAN LEAD TO OTHER BENEFITS OR AN INCREASE IN BENEFITS, INCLUDING:-

Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction. You may also be entitled to: Help with NHS health costs, Cold weather payments, Winter Fuel payment

Council Tax Discount or Exemption.

(In England, Scotland and Wales)

Once you obtain Attendance Allowance you can immediately apply for a 25% council tax discount if there are only two people in the house or 100% exemption if the person with dementia lives alone.

Council Tax Discount and Exemption are simple forms but need signing by your GP or another registered medical practitioner.

Forms can be found either on your local council internet site or by telephoning your local council and asking for the "Council Tax Discount SMI Disregard" form or the "Council Tax Exemption" form.

Blue Parking Badge

You may also be able to apply for a blue parking badge for use when you are driving with the person with dementia. Again the charity who sorts out the Attendance Allowance may be able to sort it out at the same time.

(blue) RADAR Key

You may have a need for a (blue) RADAR key that opens over 10,000 locked public disabled toilet. There is usually a small charge of around £6 and they can be obtained through most dementia charities. One simple way to get a RADAR Disabled toilet key is to go to the blue badge company

Free Library Books.

There is a series of 15 books designed to help people with Dementia and their carers share past experiences. Your local library can loan them to you free of charge. There is no limit to the time that you can borrow the books and there will not be any penalties if they are returned with any accidental damage.

The library can obtain and loan them under the "Reading Well for Mental Health Scheme" and the books can be viewed on www.picturestoshare.co.uk/shop

Incontinence

NHS trusts provide a variable range of Continence Services that can be contacted either directly or through your GP. All offer friendly advice to help with what is probably inevitable as the dementia progresses. Services vary from advice to free supplies of pads.

Personally I would advise that you fit a waterproof mattress protector together with an absorbent "kylie" bed pad under your bottom sheet in preparation.