

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

We are an independent charity providing practical help so that people who need support can live safely and well in their homes and communities. (You might know us by our former name, 'Mobile Repair Service'.) We hope to bring some light into your day with our monthly newsletter which has information, stories, tips and ideas to help you through coronavirus lockdown.

This month we are...Looking at what people are doing during lockdown



You're receiving this newsletter as you have used one of our services in the past. If you don't want to receive any future newsletters please contact us by email on newsletter@mrsindependentliving.org, phone 0330 380 1013 or text STOP followed by your name to 07780 311735.

Update on lockdown rules

The rate of coronavirus infection in the UK has fallen significantly since April. Government lockdown rules are changing from 4 July, then again on 1 August. These changes are relevant for everyone, including those at high risk.

Current advice:

- If you live alone, you may form a 'support bubble' with one other household. All those in a support bubble can spend time together inside each other's homes, including overnight, without needing to socially distance.
- You can meet up to 6 people from different households, outdoors.
- Visitors shouldn't come inside your home unless they are using the toilet (which they should clean after use).

What is a household?

Your household is made up of the people you live with. Other members of your family who do not live with you, are not part of your household.

From 4 July:

- You can meet in groups of up to two households (your support bubble counts as one household) in any location - public or private, indoors or outdoors. You do not always have to meet with the same household - you can meet with different households at different times.
- However, even inside someone's home, you should socially distance from anyone not in your household or bubble. If you receive care, this change does not affect the support you receive from them.
- You can still meet outside with people you do not live with, in groups of up to 6 - as long as you are socially distancing (staying 2 metres apart where you can).
- You can meet indoors with members of up to two households.
- If you are shielding: You no longer have to socially distance from others in your household, but you should still be careful and try to reduce social contact with anyone outside of it. Those in receipt of centrally provided food boxes and medicine deliveries will continue to receive this support until the end of July, if they want it.

From 1 August:

- If you are shielding: You will no longer have to 'shield' from 1 August as the shielding programme will pause. However you should practice strict social distancing and try to reduce social contact with anyone outside of your household or 'support bubble'.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19

Exercise you can do at home



These leg extensions will improve your balance and flexibility.

A. Rest your hands on the back of a chair for stability.

B. Raise your left leg to the side as far as is comfortable, keeping your back and hips straight. Avoid tilting to the right.

C. Return to the starting position. Now raise your right leg to the side as far as possible.

Raise and lower each leg 5 times.

Easing lockdown anxiety

We've been in lockdown mode now for 3 months or more, and it's had a big impact on our mental health and how we see the world. As things start to open back up, it's only natural to feel anxious about resuming normal activities when the world isn't 'normal'. Healthline has these 5 tips that might help you deal with any worries you might have.

- 1 Ease back into seeing people.** You don't have to do everything at once. Start with those you are closest to. Wait for the anxiety to calm down, before expanding to people and situations that make you feel anxious.
- 2 Visualise situations in your head.** Make a mental plan of how you'd like things to go.
- 3 Allow yourself to be scared.** Share your fears with those closest to you. It's very likely there are others who feel the same!
- 4 Practice self-care.** Prioritise your physical health and learn strategies to help you cope, like breathing exercises. It will help you feel more in control.
- 5 Get professional help.** If you still feel too anxious to do or enjoy anything, seek out therapy or counselling. Call Mind's infoline on 0300 123 3393.

Looking for something different to do

If you can access the internet....

- Catch up on all things local via Hackney Citizen, Hackney's independent monthly newspaper. www.hackneycitizen.co.uk.
- If Rembrandt is your thing, indulge in the close ups of his masterpieces at the Rijksmuseum. www.rijksmuseum.nl/en
- Watch an inspiring lockdown version of Matthew Bourne's 'The Red Shoes' from home. www.youtube.com/watch?v=MhDFE0SgCrQ
- Healthy Generations have lots of fitness classes happening via Zoom. See the list at www.healthygenerations.org.uk/online-exercise-classes/

If you can't get online...

- Connect to your local area through **Hackney Social Radio** on **Resonance 104.4FM, Wednesdays 11am-12pm**. Featuring music requests, audience phone-ins, stories from the community, and features from local artists.
- Catch Bob Ross creating beautiful paintings on BBC4 at 7.30pm, various evenings.



If you want help using your phone, tablet or laptop, or getting online, call us on 07423 162019 and arrange a time to speak with one of our staff or volunteers who might be able to help.

Vitamin D: The sunshine vitamin

Vitamin D helps to strengthen bones and muscles. Low levels can make you more likely to lose your balance and fracture a bone after a fall. Ways to get vitamin D:

Sunshine: Vitamin D is formed in our skin in response to sunlight. Try and get out and make the most of sunny days, as you cannot absorb Vitamin D through glass. Little and often is best - 2 or 3 times a day for 10 minutes.

Food: These foods offer a good source but it is difficult to get sufficient from food alone: Oily fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel); egg yolks; fortified margarine and breakfast cereals.

Supplements: You can purchase vitamin D supplements from supermarkets and pharmacies. Look for D3 on the ingredient list. 10 micrograms (written as 10 µg and sometimes called 400 units) is the recommended dose.

Financial matters

Are you entitled to claim Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is a payment available to people aged over 65 who, due to an illness or disability, would benefit from financial help to make their lives easier.

There are two Attendance Allowance rates of payment:

- £59.70 a week for people needing help for **either** day or night.
- £89.15 a week for people needing help **both** day and night.

Payment can be backdated to the date that the claim form was received or the date you call the enquiry line.

Tips on completing the form:

- Describe any accidents or falls you've had, and think about your 'worst day' - what happened?
- List things that you struggle to do unaided or safely, and say if an activity takes you much longer than it would somebody without an illness or disability. Give plenty of information.
- Say if you need reminding or encouraging to do things.
- Focus on how frequently you need help, e.g. if you need help looking after your appearance, this could be 6 or 7 times a day.
- Attendance Allowance does not usually take into account problems with housework, cooking, shopping and gardening.

Call the Attendance Allowance helpline on 0800 731 0122 to request the claims form. They can also help you fill out the form over the phone - if they do, your claim can be back-dated to the date of the phone call.

Support for Bereavement

If you've been bereaved as a result of COVID-19 or the current pandemic has evoked painful memories, there is support to help you.

St Joseph's Hospice: 0300 3030 0400.

Email: stjosephs.firstcontact@nhs.net

City & Hackney Wellbeing Network: 0208 525 2301

Email: chwellbeingnetwork.london

Cruse: (coronavirus-specific resources) 0808 808 1677

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

Grief Encounter (free support): 0808 802 0111

Email: griefftalk@griefencounter.org.uk

The Good Grief Trust (bereavement helpline): 0800 260 0400

Your lockdown stories



Helen's 70th: Helen had a great celebration and connected with friends on the patio (while maintaining social distancing). All had a lovely time and wanted more...

Helen keeps herself busy with gardening, cleaning, and shopping. She also does a mix of Tai Chi, dancing, exercises from her ACER group at Britannia and from her Staying Steady class at Queensbridge. Thursdays evening at 8pm she cheered for the NHS with the neighbours, dancing and singing to 'We Will Rock You' by Queen. As Helen says 'you are as young as you feel'.

Bisi's improved health: Bisi has been taking regular 2 hour walks from 6am to 8am with her daughter since the end of May, and her blood pressure has dropped from 190/130 to 130/90. Well done Bisi!



Meet the team...

This month it's Rick, who runs our digital programme. Rick says: I have been a Digital Tutor for Age Concern Hackney, a lecturer in biostatistics at the University of Zimbabwe and a researcher at the University of Southampton. In 1980 and 1970, I was street-homeless and heavily involved in squatting and anti-nazi activism. But I'm far more interested in who you are, and who you have been.

This newsletter was brought to you by **MRS Independent Living.**

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