



# Help is here.



The COVID-19 pandemic has affected people in lots of ways, and whilst Cumbrian communities have been fantastic at supporting each other, many people are finding they need a bit of extra help and support.

This booklet gives you information about support available to people in Cumbria, online and on the phone.

Don't wait for problems to get worse, there are organisations that can help, and it's better to get advice sooner rather than later.

A message from

**Cllr Deborah Earl, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Communities**

"Anyone in Cumbria who is struggling is urged to seek help sooner rather than later. We know there is a lot of help



available for people who may be struggling emotionally or financially with issues caused by the pandemic. It can be overwhelming to search through what is on offer and to find what you need. We hope this booklet which is being delivered to every household in the county helps people who are struggling. We have also improved our website [cumbria.gov.uk](http://cumbria.gov.uk) and we hope people can easily find what they need and where to get help.

You might feel overwhelmed, scared or find yourself in a position you have never experienced before. Don't wait for problems to get worse, there are organisations that can help. Taking the first step might be talking to someone you know and trust or it might be looking for help and contacting someone we are able to signpost you to.

Please take care."

**Deborah**

## Do you need urgent help?



Cumbria County Council can provide urgent help and emergency support, including basic food and essential items, if you are struggling to cope with your current situation for whatever reason.

Call the county council's Support Helpline on **0800 783 1966** (Monday to Thursday 9.00am to 5.00pm, Friday 9.00am to 4.30pm). Our supportive staff will talk to you and suggest ways to help.

You can also email: [COVID19support@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:COVID19support@cumbria.gov.uk) and you will receive a response within one working day.

## Help with food



If you are struggling to feed yourself or your family, there are organisations that can help. They are used by hundreds of people every week in Cumbria and from all walks of life.

Food banks are located across the county, find your nearest at: [cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/foodbank.asp](http://cumbria.gov.uk/welfare/foodbank.asp) or call the county council's Support Helpline on **0800 783 1966**.

## Money and debt



If you are worried about money, you can contact Citizens Advice. They can give you free advice on debt, benefits and housing problems, and make sure you're getting all the support you're entitled to.

Go online at [citizensadvice.org.uk](http://citizensadvice.org.uk) or call your local office:

● Allerdale	<b>01900 604735.</b>
● Barrow	<b>03444 889624.</b>
● Carlisle and Eden	<b>03300 563037.</b>
● Copeland and Whitehaven	<b>01946 693321.</b>
● Millom	<b>01229 772395.</b>
● South Lakes (for debt & ongoing enquiries)	<b>03444 111444.</b>
(for new enquiries)	<b>01539 446464.</b>

## Benefits and financial grants

If you've lost your job or had your hours reduced then you might be able to claim benefits.

Many people miss out because they don't know what they're entitled to.

You can check this online by visiting:

[gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://gov.uk/benefits-calculators) or if you prefer to talk to someone, you can contact Citizens Advice (see details on page 2).

If you've not claimed benefits before, you can find out more about Universal Credit (and make your claim) online:

[understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk](http://understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk).

## Test and Trace Support Payment scheme

You must self-isolate if you test positive for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive. If you are working and on a low income, you may be entitled to a £500 support payment if you are told to self-isolate.

For full eligibility information and to apply, go to your district council's website:

- Allerdale Borough Council  
[allerdale.gov.uk](http://allerdale.gov.uk)
- Barrow Borough Council  
[barrowbc.gov.uk](http://barrowbc.gov.uk)
- Carlisle City Council  
[carlisle.gov.uk](http://carlisle.gov.uk)
- Copeland Borough Council  
[copeland.gov.uk](http://copeland.gov.uk)
- Eden District Council  
[eden.gov.uk](http://eden.gov.uk)
- South Lakeland District Council  
[southlakeland.gov.uk](http://southlakeland.gov.uk)

## Free school meals and clothing grants

If you are on a low income and have children attending school, you may be entitled to free school meals and clothing grants. You can check your eligibility and apply online at:

[cumbria.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://cumbria.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals).

## Winter Warmth Fund

If you are aged 60 and over and struggling with the cost of heating your home, you may be eligible for a grant of up to £250. To apply, please contact:

- Age UK Barrow **01229 831425.**
- Age UK Carlisle and Eden **01228 536673.**
- Copeland Age & Advice Service **01946 552166.**
- Age UK West Cumbria (Allerdale) **01229 779711.**
- Age UK South Lakeland **01539 728118.**

## Help with housing



If you are having difficulties paying for housing, you should contact your landlord, housing association or mortgage company.

If you are struggling to pay your council tax, or are at risk of eviction or homelessness, contact your local district council:

- Allerdale Borough Council **0303 123 1702.**
- Barrow Borough Council **01229 876543.**
- Carlisle City Council **01228 817200.**
- Copeland Borough Council **01946 598300.**
- Eden District Council **01768 817817.**
- South Lakeland District Council **0845 050 4434.**

## Mental health and wellbeing



There are many things that can affect your mental health, particularly if you are dealing with financial problems. It's normal and there is help available.

If you need to talk to someone urgently the **Samaritans** are available 24/7 on **116 123** or online at [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org).

**Mindline Cumbria** offers support and guidance about mental health over the phone on **0300 561 0000** or text '**Mind**' to **81066**. You can also go online and chat to trained professionals at [mindlinecumbria.org](https://www.mindlinecumbria.org).

**Togetherall** is a service offering free online support to anyone aged 16 and over, 24/7 you just need a Cumbrian postcode to register. It provides online peer-peer support, access to an anonymous community and lots of information, as well as courses and resources covering a range of mental health and wellbeing topics. Go to: [togetherall.com](https://www.togetherall.com).

**Kooth** is a free online service for young people over 11. Go to [kooth.com](https://www.kooth.com).

**Every Life Matters** have produced a guide to looking after yourself and others. It contains practical information about things you can do now to look after your mental health and wellbeing, and how you can support others. Go to: [every-life-matters.org.uk](https://www.every-life-matters.org.uk) or call **07908 537541**.

If you are worried about someone you know and want to help support them it can be difficult to know the right thing to say or do. The Samaritans and Time to Change have information on their websites to help you start these conversations.

## Health and care



### The NHS is here for you.

Local health services never stopped helping people and they will continue to be here when you need them.

There are new measures in place at GP Practices, clinics and hospitals. These include:

- One-way systems.
- Hand sanitiser.
- Wear face coverings.
- You may be offered a temperature check.
- Social distancing.
- Colour coded areas to reduce the risk of people mixing.
- You may be offered an appointment with your GP or hospital consultant on the phone or on video online, this is to reduce the number of people being seen face to face, where it is appropriate to do so.

The NHS is working hard to ensure emergency and urgent treatments including cancer and specialist mental health services continue.

If you are invited for an appointment please make sure you go, unless you are showing symptoms of COVID-19. Please don't put your health at risk by missing planned care.



## NHS services

If you need urgent support with your mental or physical health you can contact NHS111 online at [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) who can direct you to appropriate services.

Please choose wisely and use the most appropriate services for your needs.

## Winter illnesses

Every year people catch colds, the flu or the winter vomiting bug.

You can do your best to protect yourself by washing your hands, staying at home if you feel unwell and having the flu jab if you are in one of the eligible groups.

You can also make sure you are stocked up with over the counter medicines to ease your symptoms, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen in tablet or drink form, you might find cough remedies helpful. You should also stock up on tissues so you can catch your germs and bin the tissues to avoid the risk of spreading your illness.

## Are you a carer or do you rely on someone who helps you?

If you are an unpaid carer for someone you do not live with you can still visit them in their home to provide care. This applies at medium, high and very high alert levels.

You can continue to provide unpaid childcare support to someone you do not live with if you are in a childcare support bubble.

Find out more at [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus).

## Domestic abuse

Everyone is entitled to live safely without fear of violence or abuse.

If you, or someone you know is suffering from domestic abuse, help is available. Call 101, or report online at [cumbria.police.uk](https://cumbria.police.uk). Always call 999 in an emergency.

## Advice for people who are clinically extremely vulnerable (shielding)

People who were considered “clinically extremely vulnerable” to COVID-19 were advised to shield during the first lockdown in March. Shielding was difficult for many people, and the government has issued new advice for clinically extremely vulnerable people, based on the local COVID-19 alert level.

You can check the local alert level for any postcode on the government website at: [gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions](https://gov.uk/find-coronavirus-local-restrictions).

Everyone must follow the basic restrictions for their local area, and the advice makes suggestions on how clinically extremely vulnerable people can further reduce their risk of catching COVID-19.

### VERY HIGH

- **Local COVID-19 Alert Level - VERY HIGH:** work from home, in general stay at home as much as possible, and avoid all but essential travel. You should also significantly reduce shopping trips, and if possible use online delivery or ask people in your household, support bubble or volunteers to collect food and medicines. People in these areas are encouraged to still go outside for exercise, and can still go to school and to work if they cannot work from home. We recognise that a small number of individuals may require additional support to follow the guidance at this alert level, if you need support call the county council's Support Helpline on **0800 783 1966**.

### HIGH

- **Local COVID-19 Alert Level - HIGH:** reduce the number of different people met outside, avoid travel except for essential journeys, work from home where possible and reduce the number of shopping trips made or go at quieter times of the day. You can still go to work if you cannot work from home because all workplaces should be COVID-19 secure, and children should still attend school. This is on top of restrictions for everyone to not meet other households indoors, unless part of a support bubble, and to only meet in groups of up to six people outdoors.

### MEDIUM

- **Local COVID-19 Alert Level - MEDIUM:** strictly observe social distancing, meet others outside where possible, limit unnecessary journeys on public transport and work from home where possible, but you can still go to work and children should still attend school. This is on top of restrictions for everyone to only meet in groups of up to six people.

It is important that clinically extremely vulnerable people continue to receive the care and support they need to help them stay safe and well. You should continue to seek support from the NHS for your existing health conditions. If you are told to go to hospital for a routine appointment, then the NHS has measures in place to make sure that it is safe for you to do so.

Go to [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://gov.uk/coronavirus) for the latest advice.

## Visiting hospital



# STAYING SAFE IN OUR HOSPITALS



**FACE COVERINGS**  
MUST BE WORN  
AT ALL TIMES



**DISTANCE**  
YOURSELF AT LEAST 2  
METRES (6 FEET) AWAY  
FROM OTHER PEOPLE



**NO GROUP  
GATHERINGS**  
A MAXIMUM  
OF 2 PEOPLE



**ONE WAY SYSTEM**  
OR FOLLOW LOCAL  
SIGNAGE WHEN  
WALKING THROUGH  
THE HOSPITAL



**AVOID  
CLOSE CONTACT  
WITH  
OTHER PEOPLE**



**WASH YOUR HANDS**  
REGULARLY FOR  
20 SECONDS  
USE SOAP AND WATER  
OR HAND SANTITISER

**We can all make a difference.  
Follow the guidance and act responsibly.**

**Help protect your family, your friends  
and your community.**



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**Wash your hands  
regularly**



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**Keep your distance if  
you go out (2 metres  
apart where possible)**



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**Avoid crowds and  
gatherings**



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**Wear a face covering  
if you can**



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**If you have symptoms,  
self-isolate and only  
leave your home to  
get tested**



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**If you're contact  
traced follow the  
advice you're given**

**Find out more at  
[cumbria.gov.uk/stopthespread](https://cumbria.gov.uk/stopthespread)**

**STAY ALERT > CONTROL THE VIRUS > SAVE LIVES**