



Disability factsheet Housing Adaptations

If you are finding it difficult to become or remain independent in your own home, then this factsheet will give you information about how to get assistance with this.

What kind of adaptations might I need?

There are a wide range of adaptations which may be helpful. These may be minor adjustments such as installing grab rails in your bathroom or replacing some of the door handles in your home with more accessible versions. However, you may require more major adaptations like a walk-in shower, stair-lift or ramp. If you are finding it difficult to be independent and think adaptations may help, you can contact the occupational therapy department at your council. Occupational therapists are trained professionals who have knowledge and expertise about equipment and adaptations that are available to ensure individuals are able to attain or retain as much independence as possible in their own home. Occupational therapists can assess you and your home and make recommendations or suggestions detailing what may help you (re) gain this independence.

The assessment should be a joint process and you should take an active part by thinking about what would help you remain or become as independent as possible. You should be able to give the therapist factual information about your situation as well as your views about what would help. It is therefore useful for you to think about your day and maybe even keep a diary about the things you find difficult or are not able to do and what you think would help or allow you to manage these.

You should think about the following:

Are you able to get in and out of bed, can you manage to get on and off the toilet, do you need help to dress yourself, do you have difficulty getting in and out of the bath? If there are stairs in the house, then how do you manage these? Can you manage in your kitchen – are the worktops, cooker, fridge at the correct height, can you stand while preparing meals, washing dishes?

Following the assessment, the occupational therapist will write a report about their findings. It will detail your needs and what can be done to meet these needs and you should ensure you get a copy of this report.

What will happen next?

This depends on what the occupational therapy report says.

If you rent your house from your council and the assessment says the adaptations are considered essential for you, then your council will pay for them.

If you rent your property from a housing association (HA) then the HA may be able to receive government funding to pay for essential adaptations. However, housing associations are allocated a fixed amount of money therefore it may be some time before your adaptations will be done.

If you rent your house privately, then again following an assessment, your council may agree that the adaptations are essential for you and pay for the adaptations.

People who own their properties may also be eligible for adaptations through their local council. Funding for adaptations would again depend on the council agreeing that the adaptations are essential for you.

If the council will not agree to fund the adaptations, then they should be able to advise you on alternative sources of funding such as a loan. The Scottish government has produced a short information leaflet about adaptations: <http://scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/266465/0079748.pdf>

Do I need permission to carry out adaptations?

If you rent your property from your local council, housing association or a private landlord, then you will need their permission before any work can begin. By law, a landlord cannot unreasonably refuse any requests for adaptations. This means that the adaptation must be necessary, suitable and effective and usually should be recommended by an occupational therapist.

If you own your property you may still need to obtain a building warrant or get planning permission from your local authority.

Is there a possibility that I won't be able to adapt my home?

It may be that it is not possible to adapt your home. This could be for one of the following reasons;

- Your landlord has good reason to refuse you permission.
- It isn't practical to make the adjustments. This may be for health and safety reasons or because the adjustments required are just not physically possible e.g. there is not enough space for a stair lift.
- If the cost of the adaptations is too expensive and you can't secure a loan or grant.

In that case, what can I do?

If you are unable to adapt your current accommodation then you will need to consider your options such as;

- Renting a more suitable property from a private landlord.
- Buying a more suitable property.
- Applying for housing from your local authority or a housing association.
- If you are a council or housing association tenant, then you could consider a transfer or exchange.

December 2014

Our Advice Service

Advice Service Capability Scotland is a national disability advice and information service. We specialise in information on cerebral palsy.

We offer:

- information on Capability Scotland services
- advice on cerebral palsy
- general advice on disability issues

You can get in touch with us by calling, e-mailing, dropping in or writing a letter.

This Factsheet can be made available in other formats e.g. audio, large print



Capability Scotland
Westerlea
11 Ellersly Road
Edinburgh
EH12 6HY

Telephone: 0131 313 5510
Textphone: 0131 346 2529
Fax: 0131 346 7864
Email: advice@capability-scotland.org.uk
www.capability-scotland.org.uk
Scottish Charity SCO11330