

Dementia? Do you need help?

Dementia is a disease that affects the brain. The most common sign of dementia is that you forget so much that day-to-day living becomes difficult. Several diseases may cause dementia. Alzheimer's disease is the most common.

Dementia may develop differently from one person to the next. Therefore the need for assistance will also be different.

In this brochure you will learn more about:

- **How** to obtain assistance
- **What kind of assistance** you can obtain
- **How** you can obtain help to complain or appeal a decision about help
- **Some advice** for family and friends (next of kin)
- **Important contact information**

Some people manage well without assistance when they first become ill. But eventually, most will need assistance. In Norway, anyone who wishes to live at home as long as possible will receive assistance to do so.

How to obtain assistance

If you suffer from dementia, the local authority in your district is responsible for providing help. You must apply to the local authority for any assistance. The local authority can help you with your application if you feel you need help.

How to contact the local authority where you live

Call the local authority switchboard. It will put you in contact with the right office or officials. If you have trouble finding the telephone number, you can:

- Call **800 43 573**. This is the telephone number for **Helsenorge**, which is the national health service's website. Here you can also get general information about health issues, illnesses, assistance and rights.
- You can also find the telephone number on the website **www.norge.no**. Enter the name of the municipality where you live in the search field.

What kind of assistance can you obtain?

The local authority determines the best way of helping you. The help you will receive will differ from one municipality to the next. To find out what kind of assistance is available in the area where you live you must ask the local authority or your GP.

Do you need an interpreter?

You have the right to an interpreter and this service is free for you. It is important that you inform your GP or the local authority that you need an interpreter. The GP or the local authority will book an interpreter for you. Tell them what language you speak. An interpreter will not disclose to others what you tell him or her (obligation of confidentiality).

Do you have to pay for assistance?

Some assistance is free, while you will have to pay a patient's fee for some help. This means that you must pay for some of the costs of the assistance.

Examples of help you can receive when you live at home

The kind of help you may receive will vary from one municipality to the next, but it should be adapted to your needs. The goal is that you should receive the assistance you need, and that you can live safely and longer in your own home. Ask the local authority about the help they can provide, and what you must pay for and what is free. You must apply to the local authority to receive help.

Practical assistance or help in the home. Examples of help may be cleaning, vacuuming, dishwashing, shopping for groceries, changing bedclothes and cleaning windows.

Community nursing. Examples may be help with day-to-day personal care, treating sores and taking medicine, and monitoring your health condition.

Meals on wheels. This means that hot dinners are delivered to your home.

Day programme. This is a programme of activities in the daytime. Examples may be participating in various activities together with others in a centre close to where you live.

Outreach contact. This is a person who can help you to be more active in your leisure time. You can go to the movies, football games, visit others or do something else you would like to do. A life assistant is free, but you must pay for tickets to the activities you choose to attend.

Physical aids. This refers to equipment that can make your day-to-day life easier and safer. Examples of such equipment in your home are:

- **Remote control safety alarm.** This is a button attached around your wrist or in a chain around your neck. It has wireless contact with a device connected to the power and your telephone in your home. When you press the alarm button the service centre can communicate with you through this device. They can also alert health personnel so they can go to your home.
- **Safety switch for your cooker.** This is a timer switch and a cooker guard which cuts off the power if you forget to turn off the cooker or it becomes too hot.
- **Electronic calendar** which can remind you of dates, the time and activities.
- **Telephone** with large keys or pictures which will make it easier to use.
- **TV remote** with large keys making it easier to use.
- **GPS** (location technology) so that you can safely leave your house. If you lose your way home, you can be easily located.

The local authority can give you more information about who to talk to about this equipment. The local authority can also help you apply to Hjelpemiddel-sentralen which is the centre that supplies this equipment. You can loan some of the equipment, other items must be purchased. For more information call:

- NAV at **55 55 33 35**
- See the website **www.nav.no/hjelpemidler** (Norwegian-language site)

What do you do if you can no longer live at home?

If it is impossible to get sufficient help at home, you may apply for a place in a **sheltered living centre** (*omsorgsbolig*) or a place in an assisted living centre (*sykehjem*). These can be found in all municipalities. You can live there for a short or extended period of time to obtain the assistance you need. Talk to your next of kin and your GP about your situation. You must apply to the local authority to be assigned a place in sheltered living or assisted living centres.

Experts on dementia in the municipality where you live

The local authority can give you and your next of kin more information about dementia and the help you can receive. Many municipalities have **dementia teams, memory teams, dementia outreach contacts or a dementia coordinator**, who are health workers with expertise on dementia. Not all municipalities have such resources, so ask your GP or local authority if they have these resources. These specialists are under the obligation of confidentiality.

Volunteer programmes

You can also obtain help and support from various NGOs. Some of these can be found everywhere in Norway, while some are only local. What such organisations can offer where you live will vary. Ask your local authority about what is available where you live and what type of help they can offer people with dementia and their next of kin.

Examples of support offered by NGOs:

- **Visiting friend** (*besøksvenn*) or **activity friend** (*aktivitetsvenn*). These are people who will visit you to do things together with you that you like to do.
- **Help with practical chores in your home**. These may be shovelling snow or shopping for groceries
- **Meeting-places** and **cafés**. These are places where you can meet others in the same situation as you and participate in activities.

Examples of some NGOs that can be found in many locations in Norway:

The National Association for Public Health (*Nasjonalforeningen for folkehelsen*)

This is an organisation that helps people afflicted with dementia and their families. It has dementia associations across Norway. The organisation operates a phone service called **Demenslinjen** (the dementia helpline). Here you can talk to health workers and ask about things you are wondering about. They are under the obligation of confidentiality. Contact:

- **Demenslinjen** (the dementia helpline) **23 12 00 40**
- See the website www.nasjonalforeningen.no/tilbud

The Norwegian Red Cross

- Call **05003**
- See the website www.rodekors.no

Frivilligsentralen (Volunteer Centre)

Many municipalities offer this service. The centre will establish contact between persons needing assistance and people who wish to volunteer their help. Call the local authority and ask whether there is such an organisation where you live. You can also look up the website www.frivilligsentral.no. Here you can find telephone numbers for these centres in Norway.

Where can you complain if you are not satisfied?

Lodging a complaint means that you can tell the local authority if the assistance you receive is not adapted to your needs, if you do not receive help or if you are not satisfied with the help you are receiving. Complaints are to be lodged with the local authority in your area.

You can receive help to lodge a complaint

Each county in Norway has a **Patient Ombud** (*pasient- og brukerombud*) who can help you obtain the help you need. This Ombud can:

- give you more information about the rights you have
- help you with advice and guidance if you are applying for assistance and services
- help you to lodge a complaint if you have not received help or the help is not adapted to your needs.

Speaking with the Patient Ombud is free of charge and the staff are under the obligation of confidentiality. To find the telephone number for the Patient Ombud in your county, you can:

- Call **800 43 573** to **reach Helsenorge** to obtain the number for your local Patient Ombud
- Go to the website www.helsenorge.no/pasient-og-brukerombudet

Information to family and friends (next of kin)

Having care responsibilities for a person with dementia may be exhausting. If you experience this, it is important to ask for help. The local authority and NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organisation) can give you more information about what kind of relief can be provided in your situation if you have caregiving responsibilities for a person with dementia. Examples of help for next of kin are:

Relief measures

Relief may be provided in several ways. For example, you may receive relief so that you are free of caregiving duties for some hours a day or some days. You can apply to your local authority for this. The local authority will assess whether you qualify for such relief and if so, how much you are entitled to. The relief service is always free of charge.

Cash-for-care benefits

If you provide very much care, you may apply to have cash-for-care benefits. The local authority determines whether you can receive this and how much. Contact the local authority for information on how to apply for this.

Caregiver courses and dialogue groups

These are programmes for people like you who are caregivers for a person with dementia. Here you will obtain useful information about dementia and you will meet others in the same situation as you. Ask the local authority whether this programme is available in your district.

Important contact information

Helsenorge.no

Helsenorge is a public website for the health services. You can obtain general information about health, illnesses, rights and assistance. You can:

- Call **800 43 573**
- Go to the website **www.helsenorge.no**

NAV (*Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration*)

NAV can give you information about financial assistance (benefit schemes) you may qualify for if you have dementia or are a caregiver for a person with dementia. You can:

- Call **55 55 33 33** (*Switchboard*)
- Go to the website **www.nav.no**

The Patient Ombud (*Pasient- og brukerombudet*)

The Patient Ombud can help people to obtain the assistance they need. To find the telephone number for the Patient Ombud where you live:

- Call **800 43 573**
- Go to the website **www.helsenorge.no/pasient-og-brukerombudet**.

Guide to public services on the web (*Veiviser for offentlige tjenester på internet*)

The guide to public services is a website with information about public services in Norway. Here you will find the telephone number for all the local authorities in Norway. You can contact them by:

- Looking up the website www.norge.no. Enter the name of the municipality where you live in the search field.

The dementia helpline (*Demenslinjen operated by the National Association for Public Health*)

The dementia helpline offers more information about dementia, assistance and rights. Assistants can give you advice and answer your questions. The assistants are under the obligation of confidentiality. You can:

- Call the **Dementia Helpline 23 12 00 40**
- Send an e-mail to **demenslinjen@nasjonalforeningen.no**
- Go to the website **www.nasjonalforeningen.no/tilbud**

Here you can write down important information:

Your regular GP:

Contact local authority:

Contact the home-help service:

Contact the dementia team/dementia coordinator/dementia contact:

Contact caregiver course/dialogue group:

Contact the Patient Ombud:

NGOs:

Other contact information: