

# GETTING STARTED



**Assess Your Needs and Resources:** Identify the kinds of things that will help you be as independent as possible.

**Benefits Check-Up:**  
The fastest, easiest way to match your needs and resources with available services.

**Where to Go...Who to Call:**  
Key contacts for people age 60 and older and adults with disabilities under age 60.



# Assess Your Needs and Resources

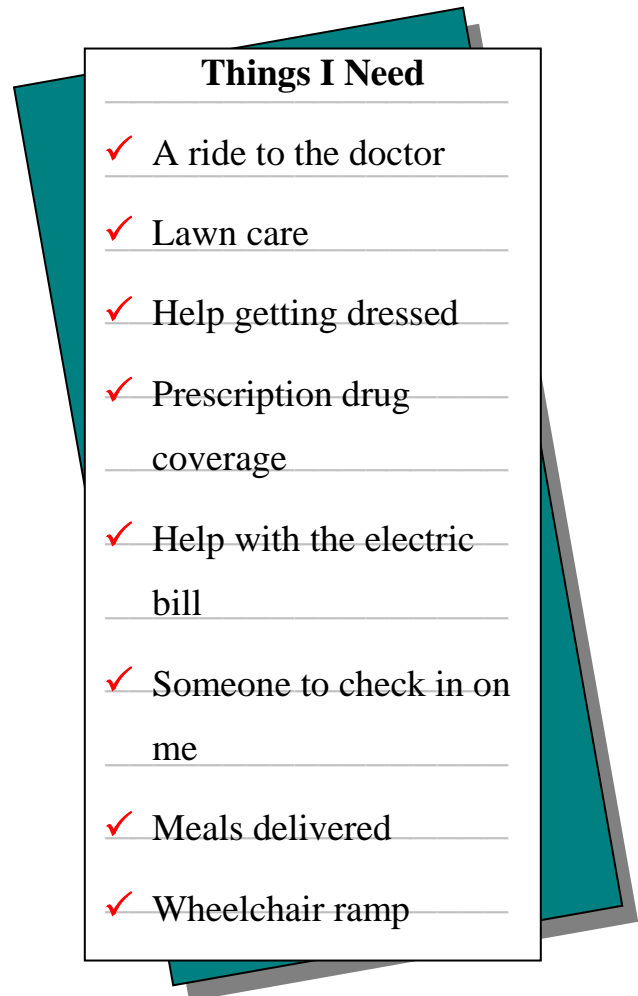
Make a list of the things you need help with, or things you can't do as well as you once could.

*Don't leave anything off your list.*

Letting some things go—like housecleaning and cooked meals—can put your health and safety at risk and hinder your independence.

Next, gather your financial information. This includes:

- All sources of your income (such as Social Security, pensions, employment, cash assistance programs);
- Expenses (including out-of-pocket costs for medical expenses not covered by health insurance, rent or mortgage, heating fuel, gas, electricity, water, telephone);
- Assets (cash, bank accounts, stocks, bonds, CDs, second car);



- The financial information of anyone else in your family who shares financial responsibility.

If you'd like to have someone help you in person, the next few pages will get you pointed in the right direction.



# Benefits Check Up

Benefit's Check Up (a service of the National Council on Aging) is the nation's most comprehensive Web-based service used to screen for benefits programs.

It provides information on more than 1,550 public and private benefits programs, such as:

- ⚙ Prescription drugs
- ⚙ Nutrition
- ⚙ Energy assistance
- ⚙ Financial aide
- ⚙ Legal assistance
- ⚙ Health care
- ⚙ Social Security benefits
- ⚙ Housing
- ⚙ In-home services
- ⚙ Tax relief
- ⚙ Transportation
- ⚙ Educational assistance

## HOW IT WORKS

**BenefitsCheckUp.org provides a list of services for which you may qualify based on your income, resources, medical or physical needs.**

**After you answer all the questions, you will be provided a list of people to contact for help.**

**It's easy to do and takes about 20-30 minutes to complete.**



### **Benefits Check Up**

**Find out what kind of benefits you may qualify for, based on your needs and income:**

**[www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org)**



# Where to Go... Who to Call



## For People Age 60 and Older

### Senior Information and Assistance

(typically known as I & A) is a free information and referral service for adults 60 and over and for family and friends helping care for the older adult.

I&A services are provided through your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

Contact your AAA any time you have a question about getting help for an adult sixty or older.

### Senior I&A Helps You

- plan, find and get more care, services, or programs (e.g. transportation, meals, housekeeping, personal care);
- explore options for paying for long term care and review eligibility for benefits;

- figure out health care insurance and prescription drug options;
- sort through legal issues (such as setting up advance directives, living wills)



### HOW TO FIND YOUR LOCAL AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA)

For the AAA office nearest you, see page 105-107 in the Government Directory of this guide.

Or, visit the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Disabilities Services Administration (ADSA) website:

 [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov)

(Click on Find Local Services for a statewide map.)



# Where to Go... Who to Call



## For People with Disabilities Under Age 60

**Home and Community Services (HCS)** is the best place to start if you're under age 60 and need help living in your home due to a disability.

HCS is a division of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Disability Services Administration (ADSA).

HCS will determine if you're eligible to receive services such as Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) or additional community-based services.

If you're eligible for home and community-based services, case management will be provided through your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). But your first stop is at HCS.

[Note: If you have a developmental

disability, you can also contact your local Division of Developmental Disabilities. See the following page for more information.]

To find out if you're eligible for in-home services, contact the Home and Community Services office nearest you.

For a listing of local numbers, see page 110 in the Government Directory of this guide.

Or, visit the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Aging and Disabilities Services Administration (ADSA) website:

 [www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov](http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov)

(Click on Find Local Services for a statewide map.)

## Independent Living Centers

are non-profit, non-residential centers run by persons with disabilities.

Depending on the area, some of the services they offer may include:

- ✿ Information and Referral
- ✿ Peer Support
- ✿ Independent Living Skills Training
- ✿ Individual Advocacy
- ✿ Systems Advocacy
- ✿ Benefits Counseling
- ✿ Housing Referrals
- ✿ Legal Aid

For a list of Independent Living Centers throughout the state, see page 92 in the Topical Directory of this guide under *Disability*.

Or, visit the Washington State Independent Living Council website:



[www.wasilc.org](http://www.wasilc.org)

(Click on the link for Independent Living Centers in the left column.)



## Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

Adults with developmental disabilities have the option of going to the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) where they may be eligible to receive services such as employment, Medicaid Personal Care (MPC), supported living, therapies, and respite.

For a list of regional DDD offices, see page 109 in the Government Directory of this guide. Or, call the Aging and Disabilities Services Administration Helpline:



**1-800-422-3263**



**1-800-737-7931 (TDD)**