

AGEING WELL

FACTSHEETS

sia spinal
injuries
association
FOR LIFE AFTER SPINAL CORD INJURY



PLANNING-SCI WALKERS

Planning for the future

Living with a spinal cord injury (SCI) creates a number of challenges, and as we get older the gap between independence and dependence narrows. Thinking about what may lie ahead will put you in a better position to deal with issues as they arise. To guide you through this planning process, SIA has produced this plan to list areas for you to consider. Some may seem obvious, others not, and some may even be uncomfortable issues that you have put off addressing.

How to use the plans

Areas for consideration are under relevant headings. Suggested time frames are shown in 2 columns, but these are merely for guidance and can be adjusted to suit your individual circumstances.

For example, evidence shows that physical wear and tear, especially of the upper limb joints, occurs on average 15-20 years post injury. You may wish to plan for the financing of a power wheelchair to help reduce pain and to conserve your upper limb joints.

You may think of other issues that you wish to include in your individual plan.

	Year 5	Year 3
Equipment		
Walking aids <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crutches• Sticks• Leg braces• Specialist shoes		
Pressure relief <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cushion• Mattress• Back or V pillow - for bed and for chair		
Household equipment and assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooker, washing machine and condensing tumble dryer• Hand rails / support rails (for stairs and toilets)• Lightweight equipment e.g. cordless vacuum• Employ a cleaner for periodic dusting and vacuuming		

<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruck sack (leaving hands free for crutches/stick) <p>New Technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exercise equipment 		
<p>Care</p> <p>Accessing care for the first time Professionals who can help: Social Services, GPs, District Nurses</p> <p>Accessing increased levels of care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care – Social Services • Needs assessment • May need ‘critical’ or ‘substantial’ need in a crisis • Benefits – e.g. carers allowance <p>Contingency planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciding who should be called in emergencies • Private carer if needed occasionally to reduce any pressure on family/ friends <p>Residential/Nursing Home</p>		
<p>Health</p> <p>Support from appropriate professionals e.g. Spinal Consultant, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, GP, Continence Specialist Nurse, Tissue Viability Nurse, District Nurse.</p> <p>Reassessing your current lifestyle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight management, exercise regime • Managing and controlling pain and fatigue • Bladder and bowel management regimes • Skin / pressure management • Mental health / depression 		

<p>Health screening: breast, prostate, bowel and bladder, diabetes, high blood pressure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual medical check-ups at your Spinal Cord Injury Centre • Regular reviews with physiotherapist, especially if you are noticing changes • Ask physio for exercises to stay flexible and avoid stiffness and help prevent injury • Use of correct walking aids and splints if necessary 		
<p>Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retraining • Reducing hours • Working from home • Job share • Retiring • Voluntary work 		
<p>Finance</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These may change when you reach 65 yrs of age • Pension <p>Extra expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional care costs if retirement taken earlier than planned • Additional costs for travel insurance • Adapting home if moving from a walking status to a wheelchair status as injury progresses • New or replacement equipment • Medical / continence supplies / medications <p>Making a Will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Wills • Funeral costs – make the necessary arrangements 		
<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider a downsize 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other housing options as appropriate e.g. on same level • Garden maintenance for heavy areas 		
<p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptations to your vehicle e.g. hand controls • Cushion to use in car • Mobility aids such as scooters 		
<p>Leisure and Holidays</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take up new hobbies • Taking holidays - short breaks may be more manageable • Assistance at airports • Cost of taking a carer when travelling 		
<p>Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying in touch with friends and relatives • Moving area to be near family • Peer support – keeping in touch with old friends • On-line Dating 		
<p>Spiritual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with any unresolved emotions • Personal goals 		
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line shopping • Getting prescriptions delivered • Keeping hospital contacts up to date (in case of emergencies) • Bleeper – to call for assistance if you fall (bracelet or worn round neck) 		

ABOUT SIA

The Spinal Injuries Association (SIA) is the leading national user-led charity for spinal cord injured (SCI) people. Being user led, we are well placed to understand the everyday needs of living with spinal cord injury and are here to meet those needs by providing key services to share information and experiences, and to campaign for change ensuring each person can lead a full and active life. We are here to support you from the moment your spinal cord injury happens, and for the rest of your life.

For more information contact us via the following:

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T: 01908 604 191 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)

T: 0800 980 0501 (Freephone Advice Line, Mon – Fri, 11am – 1pm/2pm – 4.30pm)

W: www.spinal.co.uk

E: sia@spinal.co.uk

Charity No: 1054097

Brought to you by:

PLEASE SUPPORT SIA

SIA relies on fundraising, donations and gifts in wills to provide services that help spinal cord injured people rebuild their lives.

With your help, we can provide the right support to spinal cord injured people and their families and friends so they can enjoy a full and independent life after injury. Your donation today will go towards changing someone's life.

I would like to give: £15 £20 £53 other amount £.....

Method of payment

I enclose a cheque/postal order/CAF voucher made payable to Spinal Injuries Association.

I would like to pay by Mastercard/Visa/Maestro/Switch (delete as appropriate)

Card number

Start date

Expiry Date

Security Code

Signature

Date/...../.....

Name.....

Address

.....

Postcode Tel no.....

Email address.....

Please gift aid my donation

If you tick the box it means for every £1 you donate we can claim an extra 25p from the taxman, at no extra cost to you. You need to pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax we reclaim from HM Revenue and Customs – currently 25p in every £1 you give.

Please send your donation to: FREEPOST SPINAL INJURIES ASSOCIATION or you can donate online at www.spinal.co.uk

Thank you for your support!