

Cocooning supports

People who are cocooning, including those with severe asthma and COPD, will not be able to leave their homes even to buy food, collect prescriptions, to collect social welfare payments, or meet loved ones. Where possible, those who are cocooning are encouraged to contact neighbours, friends, and family to ensure your needs are met. Where this is not possible, a huge amount of support has become available to ensure to most vulnerable members of our society are taken care of during this difficult time.

Asthma Society of Ireland

The Asthma Society's Asthma and COPD Adviceline is a call back service that is available free of charge to people with asthma and COPD and their families/carers. . Callers can speak to a specialist respiratory nurse to get practical advice about getting their condition in control. To arrange to speak with an asthma nurse, call 1800 44 54 64.

Calls can be taken Monday to Friday 09:00-17:00 and our reception staff will arrange a call back at a time that suits you. There is also the option to email nurse@asthma.ie or contact us over Facebook. If you have any concerns regarding your asthma or COPD management during COVID-19, please get in touch.

ALONE

ALONE is a registered charity that supports older people to age at home. They are rallying for volunteers to deliver groceries, prescriptions, fuel, or provide telephone support for older people cocooning during COVID19. ALONE has launched a national support line and additional supports for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) in Ireland. The support line 0818 222 024 will be open seven days a week, 8am-8pm.

Women's Aid

The Women's Aid 24hr National Freephone Helpline offers confidential information, support and understanding to women in the Republic of Ireland, who are being abused by current or former boyfriends, partners or husbands. Call 1800 341 900 if you are in need or visit womensaid.ie.

Garda Síochána

The Community Policing initiative is being implemented during the Covid19 outbreak in Ireland. Additional resources and hour allocations has allowed local Gardaí to assist the elderly and vulnerable by helping with shopping, bringing food, medicine and fuel, and even fixing technical issues for those who may not have the support of family or friends. An Gardaí have acquired additional contingency vehicles to deal with an increase in demand and are working to identify those who may be in need in order to link them into local, national and state services where appropriate.

Any person with these concerns for themselves, a vulnerable family member, or for a neighbour should contact their local Garda station. All contact details, including email contact, for local Garda stations can be found on the Garda website or in any phonebook.

An Post

A community support action plan being led by the Communications Workers' Union (CWU) and An Post will see An Post delivery staff across Ireland 'checking-in' with older and vulnerable people along their delivery route at least once a week from the 25th of March onwards. If you would like to have a postal delivery staff check in on you, you will need to register on their website here:

<https://www.anpost.com/Community-Support/Request-a-Check-In>

All postal staff will be wearing An Post uniform, carry an An Post identification badge, and adhere to the two meter physical distancing guidelines as issued by the HSE.

Here are some other supports being provided by An Post at this time:

- Collection of social welfare payments by signing An Post delivery staff as a temporary agent
- Send post for vulnerable groups for free: simply put a sign in the window stating 'I HAVE MAIL'
- An Post are developing a newspaper delivery service for vulnerable customers. Details are yet to be published
- Providing free postcards to customers that can be send without charge to anywhere in the country to encourage communication

Local Authority

The Government announced the Community Call on the 2nd of April. The purpose of Community Call is to co-ordinate local services and make them easy to access for people who need them. Local authorities have set up local Community Response Forums in each local authority area. You can get the contact details for the forum in your area here:

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/health/covid19/community_support_during_covid19.html. You can also call a national number, which is being managed by the charity ALONE: 0818 222 024. This number is available from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Sunday.

This service is available if you need help with:

- Shopping for food, fuel and other essential household items
- Transport to medical appointments
- Delivery of hot meals through local meals on wheels services
- Collection of prescribed medicines

Local Health Services

GP

You will be able to contact your local GP over the phone to make any enquiries regarding your general health and COVID-19. If you have an appointment with your GP or with the hospital that is not in relation to COVID-19, it is best to ring ahead to ensure the appointment is necessary and is still going ahead.

Pharmacies

Temporary laws have been put in place to allow GPs to send prescriptions to pharmacies by email. This means that you may not need to go to your GP surgery if you need a prescription for medication. If you have a prescription that needs to be renewed, your local pharmacy can do this for you in most cases.

If you cannot go to the pharmacy, you can contact the local community support number listed above. The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland has issued guidelines on the delivery of medicines through voluntary and state bodies such as an Gardaí and an Post.

Mental Health Services

Please visit the HSE website to find a number of mental health services available over the phone or online during COVID-19: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/connecting-for-life/news/supports-and-services-during-covid-19.html>