

DISABILITY OR HEALTH NEEDS

There are numerous local statutory and voluntary groups, including self-help groups, offering advice, information and support on a wide range of health and disability issues. Some publicise their details in the Helpline column in the free local newspaper, the Harlow Star, or the community noticeboards at Harlow Advice Centre (01279 446622) or Harlow library (01279 413772). Others may be found through community information services like Harloweb, EssexLife or EssexOnline.

Harloweb: www.harlow.gov.uk

EssexLife: www.essexlife.org

EssexOnline: www.essexonline.gov.uk

You may also find the following sections to be of interest: ACCESS, HEALTH SERVICES
NHS, MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, RESPITE CARE

Agoraphobia and Socialphobia

(01279) 304695 Harlow self-help group

For the National Phobics Society (the anxiety disorders charity), see:

www.phobics-society.org.uk

Allergy UK

This is the leading medical charity for people with allergy, intolerance and chemical sensitivity. They produce fact sheets on respiratory allergies (including asthma and hayfever), skin allergies (including eczema), food allergies and chemical sensitivity. You can request up to 5 fact sheets free of charge. Helpline staff will also give advice on dealing with symptoms and on products that may be beneficial to sufferers and on the location of the nearest NHS allergy clinics.

3 White Oak Square, Swanley, Kent BR8 7AG
01322 619898 Helpline from 9am to 5 pm, weekdays
Email: From link on the website
Website: www.allergyuk.org

Alzheimer's Society (Harlow branch)

They provide information, advice, services and support to people with dementia and their carers throughout the illness. The Outreach Workers can meet you in your home, assist you to apply for Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance, Council Tax Discount and other benefits, and link you to other services which may help. You can attend carers' courses and support groups, have a volunteer visitor or enjoy the informal Rest-A-While drop-in sessions for people in the early stages of dementia. The office helpline operates between 9.00am to 3.00pm weekdays.

Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow CM18 7BL
(01279) 418331 or 432769 Fax: (01279) 432769
Email: alzheimers@harlowbranch.freerve.co.uk
Website: www.alzheimers.org.uk

Anorexia - contact beat (beating eating disorders)

The beat Helplines are for people who want information and help on all aspects of eating disorders, including Anorexia Nervosa. They also offer many services that can be accessed via their website. Help is also always available from your GP. You could also contact your Practice Nurse or Health Visitor for help and advice about eating disorders.

08456 341414 Helpline for people aged 18 and over
08456 347650 Helpline for young people aged up to 18
07786 20 18 20 Textphone
Email: help@b-eat.co.uk for adults
Email: fyp@b-eat.co.uk for young people aged up to 18
Website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Arthritis Care and Support Group

(01279) 860324 Harlow self-help group. Ask for Brenda.

For the national Arthritis Care group, log onto www.arthritiscare.org.uk
You can download booklets for teenagers with arthritis and for parents of children newly diagnosed with arthritis from the website.

0808 800 4050 – free Helpline from 12pm to 4pm weekdays
0808 808 2000 – free Helpline from 10am-2pm weekdays for young people aged 25 and under who have arthritis or care for someone who does

Asthma

Allergy UK is the leading medical charity for people with allergy, intolerance and chemical sensitivity. They produce fact sheets on respiratory allergies (including asthma and hayfever), skin allergies (including eczema), food allergies and chemical sensitivity. You can request up to 5 fact sheets free of charge. Helpline staff will also give advice on dealing with symptoms and on products that may be beneficial to sufferers and on the location of the nearest NHS allergy clinics.

3 White Oak Square, Swanley, Kent BR8 7AG
01322 619898 Helpline from 9am to 5 pm, weekdays
Email: From link on the website
Website: www.allergyuk.org

Autism and Asperger's Syndrome Awareness Support Group

07815 792 113 Ask for Tim
(01279) 302464 Ask for Steph
The group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 7.30pm at the Cornerstone Centre, The Stow, Harlow CM20 3AJ. There is a small charge (currently £1) which includes refreshments.
For the National Autistic Society, log onto www.nas.org.uk

Barnmead Resource Centre

This is now known as the West Essex Adult Resource Centre and has relocated to the Latton Bush Centre. The Centre is run by Social Services to provide respite for people aged 18 and over with physical and sensory impairments. Referrals are via Social Services on 0845 603 7630.

Unit 26-27, Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow CM18 7BL
(01279) 439356 Fax: (01279) 432686

Binge Eating – contact beat (beating eating disorders)

The beat Helplines are for people who want information and help on all aspects of eating disorders, including bulimia nervosa and binge eating. They also offer many services that can be accessed via their website. Help is also always available from your GP. You could also contact your Practice Nurse or Health Visitor for help and advice about eating disorders.

08456 341414 Helpline for people aged 18 and over

08456 347650 Helpline for young people aged up to 18
07786 20 18 20 Textphone
Email: help@b-eat.co.uk for adults
Email: fyp@b-eat.co.uk for young people aged up to 18
Website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Blindness and Visual Impairment

Essex Voluntary Association for the Blind (EVAB) has been caring for blind and visually impaired Essex residents since 1920. It has a telephone advice and information line. The EVAB Resource Centre in Chelmsford stocks a variety of "aids to daily living." Permanent care and short stay accommodation for the visually impaired is available at a new purpose built complex at Frinton on Sea. Holidays and day care are also available. Other services from Head Office include Talking Books and Talking Newspaper Services. EVAB is an agent for the British Wireless for the Blind Fund and may be able to arrange free loan of a radio or cassette player. It can also give contact details of social clubs in Essex for retired residents who are visually impaired. EVAB volunteers run support groups at Hospital Eye Clinics.

Head Office, 202 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, CM2 0LG
01245 352560 Fax: 01245 493286
Email: admin@evab.fsbusiness.co.uk

Bulimia - see the entry for beat (beating eating disorders) at the top of this page. .

Cancer Information

Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service (Harlow)

This service is staffed by health professionals who are supported by trained volunteers. It operates from Addison House Health Centre, providing information, guidance and support to anyone affected by cancer. It offers home visits to discuss your needs; information on all aspects of living with cancer; details of other local and national support agencies and services. Volunteers offer practical support with everyday tasks such as shopping or gardening as well as organising a befriending service and respite support. The Service is open 9.30am to 2.30 pm, Monday to Thursday, except Bank Holidays.

1st Floor, Addison House Health Centre, Hamstel Road, Harlow CM20 1DS

(01279) 698673 (Answerphone outside normal open hours)
Email: Harlowcancerinformationservice@Harlowpct.nhs.uk
Website: www.harlowcancerinformationservice.nhs.uk

Caring for Harlow Carers

This group offers information, support and advice to carers, (adults and children). It also runs a club on Tuesdays from 10am to 3pm in the Barn Mead Centre, off Partridge Road, where trained and experienced support workers and dedicated volunteers will look after the people needing care, giving the carers a few hours to themselves. There is a fortnightly youth club for young carers. For further details contact:

Fiona Langridge, Caring for Harlow Carers, 3 Wych Elm, Hamstel Road, Harlow CM20 1QP
(01279) 308314 Monday to Friday 9 am to 3.30pm (Answerphone at other times)
Fax: (01279) 308313
Email: carers@harlowcarers.org.uk

Deafness and hearing impairments

Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID), South East and Anglia Region

This charity works to change the world for the UK's 9 million deaf and hard of hearing people. For more information, contact:

RNID Information Line, 19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL
0808 808 0123 Textphone: 0808 808 9000
Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk
Website: www.rnid.org.uk

Depression Alliance (DA)

DA can assist people affected by depression and also works with healthcare professionals to secure better service provision and lobbies government to influence policy making.

212 Spitfire Studios, 63-71 Collier Street, London N1 9BE
0845 123 23 20 Regional Information Line
Email: information@depressionalliance.org
Website: www.depressionalliance.org

Diabetes UK (Eastern)

They offer a range of support services: from telephone counselling to activity weekends, special insurance deals and social get-togethers. To find your local group, contact the Volunteer Development Team at:

Macleod House, 10 Parkway, London NW1 7AA
020 74241000
Email: voluntarygroups@diabetes.org.uk
Website: www.diabetes.org.uk

Dial UK (The Disability Helpline)

This organisation promotes the independence of people with disabilities by supporting a network of local disability information and advice services which are run by disabled people. Information and advice are usually available on welfare benefits, community care, equipment, independent living, mobility and transport, discrimination, holidays and much more.

St. Catherine's, Tickhill Road, Doncaster DN4 8QN
01302 310 123 – also a TextPhone. Please use voice announcer.
Fax: 01302 310 404
Email: enquiries@dialuk.org.uk
Website: www.dialuk.org.uk

Disability Essex (edpa)

The Helpline is staffed from 10am to 4pm weekdays by disabled people who can give guidance and help on any subject relating to disability. Recorded messages can be left at other times.

Moulsham Mill, Parkway, Chelmsford CM2 7PX
01245 253 400 (with minicom) Fax (01245) 346 730
(0870) 873 6333 – helpline
Email: info@essexdpa.org
Website: www.essexdpa.org

Eating Disorders Association – now called beat

The beat Helplines are for people who wish to talk about eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia and binge eating and find out about help available in their area. They also offer many services that can be accessed via their website. Help is also always available from your GP.

You could also contact your Practice Nurse or Health Visitor for help and advice about eating disorders.

08456 341414 Helpline for people aged 18 and over

08456 347650 Helpline for young people aged up to 18

07786 20 18 20 Textphone

Email: help@b-eat.co.uk for adults

Email: fyp@b-eat.co.uk for young people aged up to 18

Website: www.b-eat.co.uk

Eczema Society (National)

For information and advice on different types of eczema and treatments.

Hill House, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NA

0870 241 3604 Helpline 8am to 8 pm weekdays

Email: helpline@eczema.org

Website: www.eczema.org

Epilepsy Helpline

For advice and information for people with epilepsy concerned about issues such as their diagnosis, their medication, driving and pregnancy.

0808 800 5050 Freephone Helpline

Website: www.epilepsy.org.uk

EVAB (Essex Voluntary Association for the Blind)

EVAB has been caring for blind and visually impaired Essex residents since 1920. It has a telephone advice and information line. The EVAB Resource Centre in Chelmsford stocks a variety of "aids to daily living." Permanent care and short stay accommodation for the visually impaired is available at a new purpose built complex at Frinton on Sea. Holidays and day care are also available. Other services from Head Office include Talking Books and Talking Newspaper Services. EVAB is an agent for the British Wireless for the Blind Fund and may be able to arrange free loan of a radio or cassette player. It can also give contact details of social clubs in Essex for retired residents who are visually impaired. EVAB volunteers run support groups at Hospital Eye Clinics.

Head Office, 202 Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, CM2 0LG

01245 352560 Fax: 01245 493286

Email: admin@evab.fsbusiness.co.uk

Fibromyalgia Support Group

Ring Maureen Fagg on 07863 250 350

Harlow Social Club for the Physically Disabled

This is a social club for adults with a physical or sensory impairment. It meets fortnightly on a Friday evening at the Leah Manning Centre, Park Lane, Harlow CM20 2QJ. For more information, ring:

01279 319273 – ask for Anne 01279 865784 – ask for Linda

Heart Patients

British Cardiac Patients' Association

01954 202022 For details of local support groups

01223 846 845 National Helpline

Email: HelpMe@BCPA.co.uk
Website: www.bcpa.co.uk

British Heart Foundation (BHF)

For up-to-date information on local heart support groups, contact BHF on 01763 242414.
08450 70 80 70 – Heart Information Line

Email: region2@bhf.org.uk

Website: www.bhf.org.uk

HIV

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)

Whatever your sexuality, HIV status, gender, cultural background or ethnic origin, THT has services set up with your needs in mind. If you're affected by HIV, then they try to help.

0845 12 21 200

Website: www.tht.org.uk

Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service (Harlow)

This service is staffed by health professionals who are supported by trained volunteers. It operates from Addison House Health Centre, providing information, guidance and support to anyone affected by cancer. It offers home visits to discuss your needs; information on all aspects of living with cancer; details of other local and national support agencies and services. Volunteers offer practical support with everyday tasks such as shopping or gardening as well as organising a befriending service and respite support. The Service is open 9.30am to 2.30 pm, Monday to Thursday, except Bank Holidays.

1st Floor, Addison House Health Centre, Hamstel Road, Harlow CM20 1DS

(01279)698673 (Answerphone outside normal open hours)

Email: Harlowcancerinformationservice@Harlowpct.nhs.uk

Website: www.harlowcancerinformationservice.nhs.uk

Mencap

Mencap is the UK's leading learning disability charity, working with people with a learning disability and their families and carers. It offers information and advice on a range of learning disability issues; provides support, including housing, education, employment and leisure activities and campaigns to bring about positive changes in people's lives. You can contact the Helpline 24 hours a day. If there isn't an adviser to speak to you when you call, leave a message and they will contact you. They keep all calls confidential.

Mencap, 123 Golden Lane, London EC1Y 0RT

0808 808 1111 Learning Disability Freephone Helpline

0808 808 8181 Learning Disability Minicom Helpline

020 7608 3254 Fax

Email: help@mencap.org.uk

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

MIND (the National Association for Mental Health)

The Mind*info*Line and website provide confidential help on a range of mental health issues. They don't give medical advice but provide a mental health information service, suggesting possible options. They produce a wide range of fact sheets and publications and also offer a special legal service to the public, lawyers and mental health workers. Diverse Minds works to make mental health services more responsive to the needs of black and minority ethnic communities.

You can ring the Mind*info*Line from anywhere in the UK for the price of a local call. Deaf or speech impaired enquirers can use the same number. If you are using BT Textdirect, add the

prefix 18001. MindinfoLine has access to telephone translating and interpreting services if your first language is not English.

Mind, PO Box 277, Manchester M60 3XN
0845 766 0163 – MindinfoLine, Monday to Friday 9.15am to 5.15 pm

Email: info@mind.org.uk
Website: www.mind.org.uk

Harlow MIND provides a social centre, a befriending service and a support and information service for its members. Membership is £1 a year.

The Social Centre is at Spurriers House in the Town Park, next to Pets' Corner. It is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday from 11am to 3pm. It is open to all adults who are experiencing mental health problems on an "open door" policy. (No need for referrals or appointments). There is a Friday afternoon Women's Club that meets on Fridays from 1.30 pm to 2.45 for social activities, including outings. For more information on the Social Centre, contact Christine Usher at:-

Spurriers House Social Centre, Park Lane, Harlow CM20 2QG
(01279) 445387
Email: mindinthe_park@btconnect.com

Harlow Mind also runs a free Carer Support Service for people caring for someone with a mental health illness. It offers weekday telephone support (9.30am to 4pm), monthly Carers' Support Group meetings, one to one counselling for the carer and also an Advocacy Service to help carers access services and make their voices heard.

For more details, of Harlow Mind's Carer Support Service, contact:
Kim Clark, Service Manager, Harlow Mind, Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow CM18 7BL
(01279) 421308 - Phone and Fax
Email: harlowmind@btconnect.com

Also contact Kim for more details of the Befriending Service, a one-to-one service with a trained volunteer, which is by referral only.

Multiple Sclerosis, East Herts and West Essex Branch

07880 828 858 - ask for Stephanie Baldwin
There is useful information on the Multiple Sclerosis Society's website at www.msssociety.org.uk

NERIL (North Essex Resource & Info Line for Mental Health)

This Helpline is open every afternoon and overnight from 4pm to 8am. If you are stressed, anxious, depressed, lonely or in a crisis, give them a ring. They offer support and information for depression, eating disorders, loss, panic, relationship problems and stress. It is a confidential service except when it considers significant self-harm or harm to others may occur.

(0845) 0900 909 Calls are charged at local rates.

Obesity

TOAST (The Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust)

TOAST is a national charity based in Harlow. It provides a range of information and support systems for obese and overweight people and for those who work with them.

Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow CM18 7BL

(01279) 866010 Admin Phone and Fax

0845 045 0225 Helpline

E-Helpline: obesity.helpline@toast-uk.org.uk

Website: www.toast-uk.org.uk

OCD Network, Harlow

OCD is an anxiety disorder and is characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts and/or repetitive behaviours. You can contact the local support network by ringing 07704 891 395.

Parkinson's Disease Society, Harlow and District

(01279) 450953 or 431492

There is useful information on the national Parkinson's disease Website at www.parkinsons.org.uk

RADAR (Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation)

RADAR is a national network of disability organisations and disabled people. It represents its members by fast-tracking their opinions and concerns to policy-makers and legislators in Westminster and Whitehall and also launches campaigns to promote equality for all disabled people.

12 City Forum, 250 City Road, London EC1V 8AF

020 7250 3222

Minicom: 020 7250 4119

Email: radar@radar.org.uk

Website: www.radar.org.uk

RNID, South East and Anglia Region

This charity works to change the world for the UK's 9 million deaf and hard of hearing people. For more information, contact:

RNID Information Line, 19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL

0808 808 0123

Textphone: 0808 808 9000

Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk

Website: www.rnid.org.uk

Stop Smoking Team, Epping Forest and Harlow

The support you need to stop smoking is available through a range of local services offered free of charge by the NHS. Most services offer both group and one-to-one help. Your adviser will tell you all about treatment such as nicotine gum and patches, helping you get this medication on prescription. You can be referred by your GP or contact them directly yourself.

(01279) 827866

9am to 5pm, weekdays for local team

0800 169 0 169

National Helpline

Website:

www.givingupsmoking.co.uk

Stroke Patients

Stroke Association, East of England

This is a national charity, helping stroke patients and their families directly through its community services. These include dysphasia support, family support, information services and welfare grants.

01284 760 006

Email: eastanglia@stroke.org.uk

Website: www.stroke.org.uk

Stroke Support Harlow

(01279) 308314 - information and friendship for stroke survivors

Support for All

This is a local support group for anyone who has a loved one who is in a coma long-term or awake but incapable of responding.

(01279) 868643 - ask for Margaret Tuffen

Talking Newspaper

A Talking Newspaper is local news recorded on tape. The service is aimed primarily at blind and partially sighted people but can be used by others who find reading a strain. It gives useful information on local entertainments, shopping and special services or hints for blind people, in addition to the local news. If you would like to volunteer to help deliver this service or would like to receive it, contact:-

The Talking Newspaper for the Blind, c/o Harlow Library, The High, Harlow CM20 1HA
(01279) 863183 Talking Newspaper Chairman

Terrence Higgins Trust (THT)

Whatever your sexuality, HIV status, gender, cultural background or ethnic origin, THT has services set up with your needs in mind. If you're affected by HIV, then they try to help.

0845 12 21 200

Website: www.tht.org.uk

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E-Helpline: obesity.helpline@toast-uk.org.uk

Website: www.toast-uk.org.uk

West Essex Adult Resource Centre

This used to be based at Barnmead but relocated to the Latton Bush Centre in 2007. The Centre is run by Social Services to provide respite for people aged 18 and over with physical and sensory impairments. Referrals are via Social Services on 0845 603 7630.

Unit 26-27, Latton Bush Centre, Southern Way, Harlow CM18 7BL

(01279) 439356

Fax: (01279) 432686