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like this are not only painful but they can also hinder your walking and balance. It is important to have your foot health checked out if you have diabetes or other long-term illnesses in addition to dementia.

NHS podiatry services do not give personal foot care, such as toenail cutting, but will be able to give you pamphlets and films showing you how to care for your feet and what to do if you have a problem. You can also access this information on the internet at: [www.lookafteryourfeet.info](http://www.lookafteryourfeet.info).

### Contacting a podiatrist

People in many areas of Scotland can refer themselves for NHS podiatry, but in some parts you still need to be referred by a GP or health care professional. Contact your local NHS podiatry service for details.

The Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists (see the end of this leaflet) can help you get in touch with a private podiatry service.

## Speech and language therapists

Speech and language therapists are experts in communication and support people who have problems expressing themselves or understanding or remembering everyday conversations. They can also help with eating, drinking and swallowing difficulties.

They can help you to take part in your chosen activities to your full potential. As well as assessing and treating people with specific problems, they work with family members and carers to help them continue to provide support.

### Contacting a speech and language therapist

Your GP, mental health service and NHS Board have details of local adult speech and language therapy services which you can either be referred to or you can refer yourself.

## Need more information?

The following organisations will provide details of independent/private therapists in your area and other useful information.

**Dietitians:** British Dietetic Association, Tel: 0121 200 8080 | E-mail: [info@bda.uk.com](mailto:info@bda.uk.com) | Website: [www.bda.uk.com/improvinghealth/yourhealth/finddietitian](http://www.bda.uk.com/improvinghealth/yourhealth/finddietitian)

**Occupational therapists:** College of Occupational Therapists, 106-114 Borough High Street, Southwark, London SE1 1LB Tel: 020 7357 6480 | E-mail: [info@cot.co.uk](mailto:info@cot.co.uk) | Website: [www.cot.co.uk](http://www.cot.co.uk)

**Physiotherapists:** Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 14 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ED Tel: 020 7306 6666 | E-mail: [enquiries@csp.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@csp.org.uk) | Website: [www.csp.org.uk](http://www.csp.org.uk)

**Podiatrists:** Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists, 1 Fellmongers Path, Tower Bridge Road, London SE1 3LY Tel: 020 7234 8620 E-mail: use the enquiry form on the website (see below) Website: [www.feetforlife.org](http://www.feetforlife.org)

**Speech and language therapists:** Scotland Policy Office, Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists, 49 North Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3BG Tel: 0131 226 5250 | E-mail: [info@rcslt.org](mailto:info@rcslt.org) | Website: [www.rcslt.org](http://www.rcslt.org)

**HCPC:** Use this website to ensure that any private practitioner you contact is a registered Allied Health Professional. [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org)



# Allied health professionals

Who are they and how can they help you?

WALKING FOOT CARE MOVEMENT ENABLING  
**LIVING WELL** BALANCE  
KEEPING ACTIVE COMMUNICATION  
EAT & DRINK WELL

Making sure nobody faces dementia alone.

## Who are Allied Health Professionals and how can they help you?

Allied Health Professionals are a group of various health professionals who can support you if you have dementia. They are often referred to as AHPs and are registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) [www.hcpc-uk.org](http://www.hcpc-uk.org).

AHPs are experts in prevention and rehabilitation and will help you focus on your abilities and strengths so you can stay connected to your community and live in your own home for as long as possible.

**There are several different kinds of AHPs but this leaflet is about those you are most likely to see in a community setting.**



AHP	How they can help you
Dietitians	Help you to eat and drink well
Occupational Therapists	Help you to continue with the occupations (activities) that are important to you from getting dressed to hobbies or going to work
Physiotherapists	Help you to stay active
Podiatrists	Help you look after your feet
Speech and Language Therapists	Help you with your everyday conversations and any difficulties you have with swallowing food and fluids
Other AHPs (Arts Therapists, Orthoptists, Paramedics, Prosthetists, Orthotists and Radiographers [Diagnostic & Therapeutic] )	For more information visit <a href="http://www.ahpf.org.uk">www.ahpf.org.uk</a>

**It's best to make early contact with an AHP if you are worried about your memory or if you or someone in your family has recently been diagnosed with dementia. That way you can get the information, advice and treatment that is right for you and your family as quickly as possible.**

**This leaflet describes how AHPs can help and how to get in touch with them.**

## How Allied Health Professionals can help

### Dietitians

Eating and drinking well can help your body to fight infection and illness, keep you mobile, reduce your risk of falls and tiredness and generally boost your well-being. Dietitians can identify eating and drinking problems and help you overcome them. They can also offer practical advice to help you make food and drink choices that work best for you.

If you have lost a lot of weight recently (and have not been trying to) or your appetite has been poor for more than a week, you should speak about it to your GP or health or social care professional.

#### Contacting a dietitian

Your GP or consultant can arrange for a referral to a dietitian who will be able to see you in your own home or at your local health centre or hospital.

### Occupational therapists

Occupational therapists are experts in physical and mental health, and social care. They look at your strengths and abilities, not the things you can not or can no longer do, to help you with daily occupations.

Making small changes to your home can sometimes make life easier, and they can provide special equipment or advice that might, for example, make bathing easier or cooking safer. If you find that remembering things is becoming a problem, they can give you tips on how to boost your memory. They can also discuss with you the impact of living with dementia while you are still at work.

The occupational therapist can advise family, friends and carers how to support someone living with dementia as well as how to look after their own health. They can also suggest other services which can provide you with support.

### Contacting an occupational therapist

Ask your GP, consultant or social work department. You can also link to an occupational therapist through your local Alzheimer Scotland service or community mental health team.

The College of Occupational Therapists has some helpful resources on dementia – details on how to contact the College are shown at the end of this leaflet.

### Physiotherapists

Keeping active does not just help your physical health. It is also good for how you feel within yourself and for coping with stress. Physiotherapists are there to help if you are having difficulties with keeping active – problems with your walking, balance or ability to do the things you enjoy.

They can suggest gentle exercises to boost your strength and balance, and help you deal with any pain that may be restricting you. Sometimes a special piece of equipment might help your walking, and they can provide it.

If you are caring for someone with dementia and find you sometimes have to help them to move and walk, they can show you the best ways of doing this without harming either yourself or the person you are caring for.

#### Contacting a physiotherapist

Your GP, community mental health team or consultant can refer you to an NHS physiotherapist. You may also be able to self refer to physiotherapy in some Health Board areas. The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (see the end of this leaflet) will show you how to get in touch with a private physiotherapist.

### Podiatrists

Podiatrists, or chiropodists as they used to be known, treat conditions that affect your legs and feet, such as corns, in-grown or thickened toenails and foot ulcers. Conditions