

## Driving and getting out and about

**Getting out and about is important because it lets you carry on with your life and continue to do the things you enjoy. For some people it is about using public transport while for others, it is about being able to drive, both of which are key elements to maintaining your independence.**

### 1. Driving

It is important that all drivers are aware of the legal position regarding disability and driving. Failure to adhere to the legal duties can lead to penalty points, disqualification and fines.

#### **Contacting the DVLA – why and when you should do so**

In the UK there is a legal duty for driving licence holders to inform the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority) when they are aware of a “relevant” or “prospective” disability that could affect ability to drive. This is to protect you, your passengers and other road users.

**If you have had a positive diagnosis of Huntington’s disease and are symptomatic, you must inform the DVLA in order to comply with the law.**

People who are at risk of Huntington’s disease are not obliged to inform the DVLA of their risk status as long as they remain free of symptoms.

Similarly, people who have been given a positive test result but are pre-symptomatic are not obliged to inform the DVLA of their risk status. However, when symptoms of Huntington’s disease begin to develop, they must inform the DVLA.

Speak to your HD Specialist, your GP and your family about your options. You can also contact the DVLA [here](#) for more information.

GPs and doctors are responsible for informing patients of their medical condition and may advise patients to stop driving. **However, the onus is on**

**the individual to inform the DVLA.** Only in very exceptional circumstances it is possible for a doctor to inform the DVLA without a patient's consent.

### **What happens when I inform the DVLA?**

The DVLA has a Medical Advisory Unit which undertakes medical assessment of disability. You will usually receive a decision within six weeks. DVLA has options which may include:

- Restrict driving licence to 1, 2 or 3 years (medical review required).
- Request a re-test at one of its assessment centres.
- Licence revocation (this effectively means that your licence has been cancelled by the DVLA).

### **Car insurance**

Check your insurance policy - you may have to tell the insurance company about factors that increase your risks when driving.

Failure to disclose relevant information to your insurance company may result in refusal to cover you in the event of an accident, invalidating your insurance cover.

## **2. Public Transport**

If you have had to inform the DVLA and give up your licence, or if you don't drive, it is a good idea to check out the local public transport services. You can also check if there are family members or friends who can take you places in their car.

### **Buses, trains and taxis**

Find out what community transport is available, including buses, trains and taxis. A taxi card that gives you discounted fares may be available to you – contact our [Financial Wellbeing Service](#) to find out more.

Apply for a Blue Badge for anyone who gives you a lift regularly to help with parking and access. More details are available [here](#).

Avoid using public transport at peak times - it will more busy and usually costs more. Off peak is generally quieter and cheaper.

For those who find themselves getting tired easily or are having issues with walking/balance, think about using a wheelchair for longer journeys. Train stations, airports and larger shopping centres will have people on hand to help.

[Contact your HD Specialist](#) for more information. We can help you to find out more and to take your next steps, whether you are a driver or are using public transport.

## Useful links

[Contact a Scottish Huntington's Association HD Specialist](#)

[Scottish Huntington's Association Financial Wellbeing Service](#)

[National and Regional Care Frameworks for Huntington's Disease](#)

[Sign up for regular updates from Scottish Huntington's Association](#)

DVLA: [visit website](#) or call the medical support team for enquiries about reporting health conditions on 0300 790 6806

[Apply for a Blue Badge](#). Local authorities also have contact numbers and paper application forms.

Updated January 2022