

AskSARA

Personalised advice to make living easy

Asksara.org.uk

The history of AskSARA

The AskSARA ('self-assessment rapid access') application was developed by the DLF in 2004-06 with support from the Department of Health. Since that time it has undergone a range of improvements including new topics, case studies and the addition of supplier ratings.



The Information Standard



The advice contained in the reports generated by users of the tool is OT-authored and governed by the NHS's **Information Standard** – www.england.nhs.uk/tis of which the DLF was a founder.

AskSARA covers more than ninety topics and further topics are regularly added.

Users of **AskSARA** access DLF's central product database **Living Made Easy**, the UK's leading comparison site for equipment for independent living. Users can search and compare more than ten thousand products from over almost a thousand national suppliers.

DLF runs a 'national' version of the tool and also licenses a range of organizations so that they can offer an own-branded version with extra bespoke content and signposting. DLF hosts and maintains all these versions and any running updates needed by licensees are implemented by DLF and covered by annual licence fees. Licensees promote their versions through their own websites, shops, information centres and staff rely on the advice to handle the increasing demands of the burgeoning self-purchase market.

In 2018 we have moved to a more secure set-up using https-format, the pages have been redesigned and we will be introducing our mobile-responsive design. We are delighted to announce the introduction of our Welsh-language version and new topics dealing with dementia are in the pipeline.

Left: AskSARA Home Page and the licensed Medequip version.

Looking for equipment to live independently? – AskSARA

- ▶ **Step 1** – Choose a topic
- ▶ **Step 2** – Answer some questions
- ▶ **Step 3** – Receive a **free personalised report** with advice on suitable equipment

Free
Report



Typical comments from user surveys

'Full of information that I hope will enable further support to my mother'

'I will try and contact some of the suggested organisations'

'Review the information you have given me, discuss some of the options with my Mum and then contact the council to discuss our thoughts, also review some of the products you have highlighted, get a copy of the information you have provided and use it as a check list....Thank you a very good website'

'To contact some of the mobility aid and assessment centres listed some of which I was unaware. The opportunity to try things out for my parent will be important to see if it's going to be suitable. Thank you.'

What does AskSARA do?

AskSARA is an online guided advice tool. Users work through topic-based question sets to produce a multi-page tailored report that they can email or print. Whilst in the live report online they can follow links to DLF's **Living Made Easy** comparison site of products and suppliers.

Feedback from surveys

- ▶ An equal proportion of users using **AskSARA** for themselves and those using it on behalf of someone else
- ▶ The vast majority find the tool useful as an aid and it identifies items of equipment that would be of use
- ▶ Many are looking at privately purchasing equipment
- ▶ Many are also using other support services as their next step for assistance
- ▶ The vast majority would recommend **AskSARA** to other users



Creating custom versions of AskSARA

▶ A seamless service

AskSARA is typically branded in the house style of the licensee so that the end user sees the service as being provided for them by the licensee. Ideally the version is co-branded so that it benefits from local and impartial endorsements.

▶ Home page advertising banners

There is a generous advertising banner section on the home page designed to carry advertising by the licensee. Adverts typically promote seasonal campaigns such as keeping warm in winter and useful resources such as independent living centres.

▶ Topics, questions and core advice

Licensees can commission new topics and the DLF is always keen to have suggestions of new topic areas.

▶ User-generated reports

Custom versions of AskSARA come to life by the addition of information about information and signposting to specific services including independent living centres, charity and voluntary services, handyperson and local transport options. There may be topic-specific programmes available locally such as telecare schemes, falls prevention programmes that can be sign-posted. This information can be updated at any time.

▶ User satisfaction surveys

AskSARA has a built-in user satisfaction survey. Licensees can use this to track the effectiveness of the service and to find out awareness levels of their programmes.

▶ Reporting and insights

DLF provides a full range of reporting to licensees including web analytics, key performance metrics and downloads from completed user surveys.



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About DLF

DLF has been providing impartial information and advice – for almost 50 years – to health and social care professionals and older and disabled people, their families and carers. Part of Shaw Trust since November 2014 we offer a range of services nationally,

▶ For the public:

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

- > Reached 1 million+ visitors in 2017
- 10,000+ products from 950+ manufacturers and suppliers
- > Advice & Factsheets

www.youreable.com

- > Peer to peer forum
- > 800k+ visitors in 2017

Telephone helpline

▶ For healthcare professionals:

DLF-Data

- > Subscription service for healthcare professionals

DLF Training & Conferences

- > The UK's leading provider of Trusted Assessor training – nationally accredited
- > Moving & Handling People conferences
- > Equipment-related training for healthcare professionals
- > CPD accredited
- > Open and custom options at venues UK-wide

DLF is part of Shaw Trust, a registered charity – England and Wales number 287785, Scotland number SC039856.