

Disability Living Allowance

If you have Parkinson's, you may have some concerns about how you'll manage financially. If you need help with your day-to-day needs, this can lead to extra costs. But there is some financial support available, so it's important to find out what benefits you're entitled to.

This sheet explains what Disability Living Allowance is, who qualifies, how to claim and what information you need to supply when you claim.

Important changes

It is no longer possible for those aged between 16 and 64 to make a new claim for Disability Living Allowance. Instead, you will need to make a claim for Personal Independence Payment.

Find out more: see our information sheet *Personal Independence Payment*.

Disability Living Allowance will continue to be available to new claimants under 16. If you are aged 65 or over and have care or supervision needs, you should consider claiming Attendance Allowance instead.

Find out more: see our information sheet *Attendance Allowance*.

If you already receive Disability Living Allowance and your circumstances change, you will be invited to claim Personal Independence Payment. You will not have the choice to stay on Disability Living Allowance.

You will be asked to claim Personal Independence Payment if:

- you report a change in your care or mobility needs
- you reach the end of an existing award of Disability Living Allowance, **or**
- you are approaching the age of 16 (unless you are terminally ill)

Other existing adult claimants may also be invited by the Department of Work and Pensions to claim Personal Independence Payment. This will not apply, however, if you were aged 65 or over on 8 April 2013 – in this case, you will remain on Disability Living Allowance.

If you think you have grounds for a review of your Disability Living Allowance, you should contact the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** or email **hello@parkinsons.org.uk** for information and advice (see page 5 for more details).

It is very important that if you are asking for a review of the benefit from the Department for Work and Pensions, you understand the possible consequences. The amount of money you receive may go up or down.

What is Disability Living Allowance?

Disability Living Allowance is a benefit for you, not for a carer (if you have one), and you don't need to have someone looking after you to qualify. If you are awarded this benefit, it is entirely up to you how you use it. You can still claim if you are in employment.

Disability Living Allowance has two parts or 'components'. You can get either component or both together, depending on your condition.

The care component

This part is paid to people who need help looking after themselves or need someone to make sure they're safe. There are three rates to this component and the rate you are awarded depends on the amount of care or supervision you need. It is based on what help you need – not on the help you actually get. It doesn't matter whether you live alone or with other people or if you receive a lot of help or a little.

The mobility component

This is paid to people who have problems walking around outside the home. It has two rates and the rate you are awarded depends on the nature of your walking difficulties.

How much can I get with a Disability Living Allowance?

You can get one of three rates of the care component and one of two rates of the mobility component. All the rates are weekly. The figures are adjusted each year in line with other benefits:

Care component

Highest rate: £82.30

Middle rate: £55.10

Lowest rate: £21.80

Mobility component

Higher rate: £57.45

Lower rate: £21.80

Will my Disability Living Allowance affect any other benefits?

Getting Disability Living Allowance may increase the amount of any means-tested benefits you receive, such as Housing Benefit or Working Tax Credit. It can be paid in addition to any other social security benefits.

Disability Living Allowance is not taxable. It is not based upon National Insurance contributions and any income or savings you may have do not affect it.

How is Disability Living Allowance paid?

Disability Living Allowance is normally paid every four weeks into a bank, building society or Post Office card account.

Find out more: if you don't have a bank account, have a look at our information sheet *General information about benefits*. This explains how to get a bank account.

What if I go into hospital?

If you go into hospital, Disability Living Allowance will stop after a total of four weeks (either in one stay, or several stays, where the gaps between stays are no more than four weeks each time). It can restart when you return home.

What if I go into a care home?

If you pay your own fees for the care home without help from the local authority or health service, your Disability Living Allowance can continue to be paid. If the local authority helps with the fees, the care component will stop after a total of four weeks (either in one stay, or several stays, where the gaps between stays are no more than four weeks each time). It can restart when you return home. The mobility component is not affected even if the local authority helps with the fees.

If a nursing home is paid for by the health service, both the care and mobility components will usually stop after four weeks and can restart when you return home.

How long is Disability Living Allowance awarded for?

Disability Living Allowance is awarded for a fixed period of time. This could be for just one year, or a longer period if your condition is not likely to change. You will normally be contacted several weeks before the award runs out and invited to reapply.

What if my condition gets worse?

If you have only one component of Disability Living Allowance or a lower rate of one component and your condition gets worse, you can ask for your claim to be reviewed. If this happens, however, you may need to make a claim for Personal Independence Payment rather than continue on Disability Living Allowance (see 'Important changes' on page 1).

Before putting in your review request, try to get advice and information on the process. If the Department for Work and Pensions gets information that shows that your care needs or mobility problems have reduced, then your Disability Living Allowance may be withdrawn. So, it's really important that you provide an accurate record of your care needs or mobility problems.

Before asking for a review, you should consider how your needs have increased on a daily basis. What extra support and help do you need now that you did not need when you first claimed Disability Living Allowance? Writing a diary of your care needs over 24 hours may help you with this.

Find out more: see our information sheet *Keeping a diary: people with Parkinson's*.

It is important to get medical support before you ask for a review. A letter from your GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse that points out what your current care needs or mobility problems are, will help. The letter may simply say that they have read the diary of your care needs and they agree that your condition would create those needs.

If you think you have grounds for a review of your Disability Living Allowance, then you should contact our helpline on **0808 800 0303** or email **hello@parkinsons.org.uk** for information.

When you ask for a review, you need to contact:

Disability benefits helpline

0345 712 3456

Textphone **0345 722 4433**

Unless you were aged 65 or over on 8 April 2013, in which case you need to contact:

Attendance Allowance Unit

0345 605 6055

Textphone **0345 604 5312**

You will normally be sent a review form to complete.

If your condition improves, you also need to get in touch with the Department for Work and Pensions (on one of the above numbers) as soon as you can. They will normally send you a review form to complete, so that they can re-assess your award.

It is always important to provide full, accurate information to the Department for Work and Pensions, and to let them know if your circumstances change.

More information and support

For more information on rights and benefits, you can contact the Parkinson's UK helpline on **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email **hello@parkinsons.org.uk**

We also have information sheets on other benefits you may be entitled to. You can download these from our website at **parkinsons.org.uk/publications** or call our helpline.

We run a peer support service if you'd like to talk on the phone with someone affected by Parkinson's who has faced similar issues to you. The service is free and confidential – ring the helpline to talk to someone about being matched with a volunteer.

Our helpline can also put you in touch with one of our Parkinson's local advisers, who give one-to-one information and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's. They can also provide links to local groups and services.

We also have a self-management programme for people with Parkinson's, partners and carers. It is an opportunity to reflect on life with the condition, learn about self-management and think about the future. To find out if there is a group near you visit **parkinsons.org.uk/selfmanagement**

Our website **parkinsons.org.uk** has a lot of information about Parkinson's and everyday life with the condition. You can also find details of your local support team and your nearest local group meeting at **parkinsons.org.uk/localtoyou**

You can also visit **parkinsons.org.uk/forum** to speak with other people in a similar situation on our online discussion forum.

Parkinson's nurses

Parkinson's nurses provide expert advice and support to people with Parkinson's and those who care for them. They can also make contact with other health and social care professionals to make sure your needs are met.

The role of the Parkinson's nurse varies. Each will offer different services, aiming to meet local needs. Some nurses are based in the community, whereas others are based in hospital settings.

Many Parkinson's nurses are independent prescribers. This means they can prescribe and make adjustments to medication, so someone with Parkinson's doesn't always need to see their specialist for changes to or queries about their Parkinson's drugs.

Parkinson's nurses may not be available in every area, but your GP or specialist can give you more details on local services.

You can find out more at **parkinsons.org.uk/nurses**

Thank you

Thank you to Disability Rights UK for updating this information sheet. Disability Rights UK also have a wide range of online factsheets relating to disability-related issues including Access to Work, education, the Blue Badge scheme, independent living and disabled facilities grants.

Visit their website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org



Disability Living Allowance (2016)

If you have comments or suggestions about this information sheet, we'd love to hear from you. This will help us ensure that we are providing as good a service as possible. We'd be very grateful if you could complete this form and return it to **Editorial and Creative Services, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ**. Or you can email us at publications@parkinsons.org.uk. Thanks!

Please tick...

- I have Parkinson's. When were you diagnosed?
- I'm family/a friend/a carer of someone with Parkinson's
- I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's

Where did you get this information sheet from?

- GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse
- Parkinson's local adviser
- Parkinson's UK local group or event
- Ordered from us directly
- Our website
- Other

How useful have you found the information sheet? (1 is not useful, 4 is very useful) 1 2 3 4

Have you found the publication easy to read/use? Yes No

What aspects did you find most helpful?

Were you looking for any information that wasn't covered?

Do you have any other comments?

If you would like to become a member of Parkinson's UK, or are interested in joining our information review group, please complete the details below and we'll be in touch.

- Membership
- Information review group (who give us feedback on new and updated resources)

Name

Address

Telephone Email

What is your ethnic background? Asian/Asian British Black/Black British White

Mixed/multiple ethnic backgrounds Other (please specify)

We're the Parkinson's charity that drives better care, treatments and quality of life. Together we can bring forward the day when no one fears Parkinson's.

Can you help?

At Parkinson's UK, we are totally dependent on donations from individuals and organisations to fund the work that we do. There are many ways that you can help us to support people with Parkinson's. If you would like to get involved, please contact our Supporter Services team on **020 7932 1303** or visit our website at parkinsons.org.uk/support. Thank you.

Parkinson's UK

Freeconfidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–7pm, Saturday
10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

Text Relay **18001 0808 800 0303**

(for textphone users only)

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

How to order our resources

0845 121 2354

resources@parkinsons.org.uk

Download them from our website
at parkinsons.org.uk/publications

We make every effort to make sure that our services provide up-to-date, unbiased and accurate information. We hope that this will add to any professional advice you receive and will help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your health and social care team if you are worried about any aspect of living with Parkinson's.

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