

National Health Service costs

If you have Parkinson's, you might have some concerns about how you'll manage financially. Although most of your healthcare will be covered by the NHS, you might be worried about paying for any extra medical costs.

But there is some financial support available, so it's important that you are aware of what benefits and schemes you are entitled to apply for. This sheet explains more about National Health Service costs and any help you might be able to get to pay for them.

Can I get help with health costs?

Most National Health Service (NHS) treatment is free, but some things have to be paid for. What you have to pay for is different in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. For example, in Scotland, dental check-ups and sight tests are free. In Wales, dental check-ups are free for people aged under 25 or over 60. Prescriptions are free in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but they have to be paid for in England.

People under 16, or under 19 and in full-time education, don't have to pay for prescriptions, sight tests or dental treatment.

People with certain medical conditions might not have to pay some charges. For example, people with insulin-dependent diabetes get free prescriptions and people with glaucoma get free eye tests.

This information sheet gives general information. If you're not sure whether you can get any of your costs paid for call the Help with Health Costs line on **0845 850 1166**.

Means-tested benefits

If you or your partner get income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, you will get free:

- NHS prescriptions
- NHS dental treatment

- NHS sight tests
- NHS wigs and fabric supports

You will also get vouchers towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses.

Contributory ESA and contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance

If you get either of these benefits on their own, they won't automatically entitle you to help with health costs. However, you might get help if you are on the Low Income Scheme (see the next column for more details).

Pension Credit

If you get Pension Credit 'Guarantee Credit', with or without Savings Credit, you can get the same help with health costs as people who get the means-tested benefits listed above.

If you only get Pension Credit 'Savings Credit', you can't automatically get help, but you might get help under the Low Income Scheme (see the next column).

If you're over 60

If you're aged over 60, you'll get free:

- NHS prescriptions, whatever your income
- NHS sight tests, whatever your income

If you need help with other costs, this can be claimed under the Low Income Scheme.

If you're receiving tax credits

Some people who get Working Tax Credit and/or Child Tax Credit may be able to get free prescriptions, depending on their income. If you qualify, you will be sent an NHS tax credit exemption certificate.

If you can't go out

If you have an ongoing physical disability that means you can't get out without help from someone else, you'll get free prescriptions. You can apply for an exemption on form FP92A. You can get these from your doctor, pharmacist or hospital.

The NHS Low Income Scheme

This scheme provides income-related help with health costs for people who aren't automatically exempt from NHS charges, but who are on a low

income. The scheme is administered by the NHS Business Services Authority. To apply you need to fill in an HC1 application form (available from **0845 850 1166**). You can get help with:

- NHS prescriptions
- NHS dental treatment
- sight tests, glasses and contact lenses
- travel to hospital for NHS treatment
- NHS wigs and fabric supports

How much help you get depends upon your income and circumstances. Your capital (your assets such as savings and property, minus your debt) must be below £16,000 (or £23,250 in England or Scotland and £22,500 in Wales, if you live permanently in a care home).

If your income is at a level that entitles you to free services, an HC2 certificate is posted to you. An HC3 certificate will be sent if you qualify for partial help.

If you think you might be able to get help under the Low Income Scheme, you should apply now, as you can't always predict when you might have to pay out in the future.

NHS inpatients

If you're an inpatient, you'll get free:

- NHS treatment while in hospital
- medication to take home when you're discharged
- glasses or contact lenses prescribed by the hospital's eye department – but you must choose the cheapest frames available

If your own dentist or optician visits you in hospital to treat you, you will have to pay for this in the normal way, unless you are already able to get help with NHS costs.

NHS outpatients

If you're an outpatient, you'll get free:

- medication while in hospital
- NHS dental treatment carried out in the hospital
- NHS sight tests

How can I claim help?

Ring the Help with Health Costs line on **0845 850 1166** to get an HC1 form with a pre-paid return envelope. Jobcentre Plus offices and NHS hospitals also have HC1s available. Some GPs, dentists and opticians might also have them.

I have to pay for prescriptions – is there anyway to cut the costs?

If you need prescription items on a regular basis, you can sometimes save money with a Pre-payment Certificate (PPC).

Each item you are prescribed will cost £7.40. A three-month PPC costs £29.10 and covers all items you get during that period, so if you need four or more prescriptions in that time, you'll save money with a PPC. A 12-month PPC costs £104, so if you need 14 or more prescriptions in a year, it will save you money.

To get a PPC:

- visit www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/healthcosts
- use form FP95, available from your local pharmacy
- call **0845 850 0030**

What is the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme?

The Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme covers any journeys you might make to an NHS hospital or similar place for NHS treatment. If you need to have someone with you, their travel might also be paid for.

If you're entitled under this scheme, the hospital can also refund the costs of journeys already made using claim-form HC5. There should be an office at the hospital where you can do this.

Do I qualify?

The rules for this scheme are very detailed, but the main groups included are:

- people in one of the exempt groups (shown in next column)
- people who have a certificate from the NHS Low Income Scheme

Exempt groups

These are the main groups of people who qualify for the scheme:

- If the patient, or a member of the patient's family, gets income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or the Guarantee Credit of Pension Credit.
- If the patient is a permanent resident in a care home and their place is at least partly paid for by a local authority.
- If the patient, or their partner, gets Child Tax Credit, or both Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, or Working Tax Credit that includes a disability or severe disability element, and in each case, the gross annual income is not over £15,276.

If you have a certificate from the Low Income Scheme, full or partial, refunds of travel costs may be available, depending on how your local authority works it out.

What travel costs can I claim?

The law allows help with the costs of travelling by the cheapest means of transport available. Usually this means public transport at off-peak times.

When relevant, the scheme will pay the costs of necessary overnight accommodation.

What if I don't have any cash?

If you qualify for help, but can't, for example, hand money over to buy a ticket for the train or bus, then you may be able to claim a Social Fund crisis loan from Jobcentre Plus. This will give you the money you need to get to your appointment.

More information and support

We have information sheets on other benefits you may be entitled to. You can download these from our website at parkinsons.org.uk or see the back page of this sheet for details of how to order these for free.

Our helpline

For more help and information on rights and benefits, you can contact our dedicated employment and benefits adviser on 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

Information and support workers

Our UK-wide network of information and support workers can also provide details about benefits and help you with the application process. You can find your local information and support worker online at parkinsons.org.uk/isw or call our helpline for details.

Local groups

Speak to others about their experiences at your local Parkinson's UK group. Visit parkinsons.org.uk/localgroups or call our helpline for details of your nearest meeting.

Online forum

Speak to others in a similar situation through our online discussion forum at parkinsons.org.uk/forum

Thank you

Thank you to Disability Alliance for updating this information sheet.



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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 [Information Resources Team, 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?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> GP, specialist or Parkinson's nurse | <input type="checkbox"/> Information and support worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parkinson's UK local group or event | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharward Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Our website | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

We're the Parkinson's support and research charity. Help us find a cure and improve life for everyone affected by 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

Free* confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–8pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

Text Relay **18001 0808 800 0303**

(for textphone users only)

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

*calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks.

How to order our resources

01473 212115

resources@parkinsons.org.uk

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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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?

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

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Do you have any other comments?

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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